The End of the Times
A Proposition for Transitional Journalistic Architecture
by
Duncan Hayes McIlvaine
B.S. Architecture
University of Maryland, College Park, 2005

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE
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Abstract

The End of the Times
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by

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Submitted to the Department of Architecture on
January 15, 2010 in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

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This thesis proposes a new civic building type for journalism, playing out a scenario in which the production and maintenance of an archival record has become the primary function of the post-corporate professional journalistic organization.

The architectural proposal originates in a broader inquiry, asking: when culturally significant building types approach categorical obsolescence, how can architects formulate new, more relevant types to replace them?

Specifically, the thesis addresses the impending obsolescence of the newspaper headquarters building type through two complementary strategies. First, the thesis is founded upon a systematic study of architecture's long-term engagement with the newspaper industry. Simultaneously, it seeks opportunities for architecture within the contemporary discourse surrounding professional journalism and news media.

Enabling narratives derived from these concomitant investigations are subsequently utilized as bases for the development of a conjectural civic + industrial + archival hybrid building type.

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And to the Dudio — for my survival;

Thank you all.

—

DHM. 15 January 2010.

THE END OF THE TIMES?
A PROPOSITION FOR TRANSITIONAL JOURNALISTIC ARCHITECTURE

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Table of Contents

1.00	*13*	**Analysis and Theoretical Framework**	***11***
1.01	*15*	Objective	
1.02	*17*	Historical Context	
1.03	*19*	Research Methodology	
1.04	*21*	Type Definitions	
1.05	*23*	Study 1: Typological Evolution	
1.06	*49*	Hyper-Speculation and Hyper-Specialization in Newspaper Facility Design	
1.07	*53*	Study 2: Contemporary Scenario and Discourse	
1.08	*59*	Observations	
1.09	*63*	Enabling Narratives	
2.00	*67*	**Quantitative Research**	
2.01	*69*	Typological Timeline	
2.02	*71*	Type Classification Matrix	
2.03	*73*	Siting Chronology	
3.00	*85*	**References**	
3.01	*87*	Works Cited	
3.02	*89*	Annotated Bibliography	
4.00	*99*	**Architectural Proposal**	
4.01	*100*	Narrative / Conjectural Response 1: Expansion of Public Space for Journalism	
4.02	*104*	Narrative / Conjectural Response 2: Civic Transformation of the Hyper-Rational Site Type	
4.03	*110*	Narrative / Conjectural Response 3: Journalism in the Archive	
4.04	*116*	Exploded Axonometric	
4.05	*126*	Sections	
4.06	*156*	Site Plan	
4.07	*160*	Proposal *in situ:* Perspectival Views	

1.00
Analysis and Theoretical Framework

1

1.01
Objective

Typological Innovation

This thesis proposes a new civic building type for the collapsing American newspaper industry. It is not a rescue attempt: its goal is not to deliver the print-edition newspaper from obsolescence through architectural design.

Rather, the principal objective of this thesis is to advance a relevant form of architecture for professional journalism, to replace an obsolete type: the newspaper headquarters building. In order to pursue this objective, the proposal exploits the architectural profession's well-established relationship with the ubiquitous, systemic, and culturally significant informational medium that was the daily newspaper.

Focus of Investigation

As a basis for the formulation of a conjectural architectural response, this thesis interrogates the course of architecture's relationship with the American newspaper industry, asking the following key questions:

In **Study 1 (Section 1.05)**, which focuses on the typological evolution of newspaper facilities:

What factors – economic, pragmatic, social, or otherwise – have historically supported productive architectural engagement with journalistic programs, either by triggering increased

demand for architectural design or by requiring architectural innovation?

As a corollary, what factors have eroded the architecture-journalism relationship, either by severely limiting architecture's zone of operation or by rendering it entirely superfluous?

What factors enabled the architecture of professional journalism to influence the shape and use of public space in American cities?

What were the formal outcomes of these conditional factors?

—

Simultaneously, in **Study 2 (Section 1.07)**, the thesis investigates opportunities for architectural conjecture that have arisen from fundamental shifts in the news media industry and the increasingly public practice of journalism, asking:

What opportunities for architectural innovation have arisen out of contemporary conditions within the profession of journalism, and which of these opportunities remain untested?

What architectural constraints have been loosened by ongoing changes in the practice of journalism?

What new architectural constraints might emerge that could give rise to new formal, spatial, and organizational approaches to the architecture of journalism?

Finally, in formulating enabling narratives **(Section 1.09)** to support an architectural proposal, the thesis asks:

How might these subsiding/emerging design constraints enable architectural conjecture?

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1.02
Historical Context

During the 19th and 20th Centuries, architecture served the news media industry — specifically, major U.S. newspapers — by mastering a fundamental process: the synthesis of physical identity from functional hybridity. Architects resolved the complex program of the specialized newspaper headquarters building, generating physical identity for a commercial enterprise. The newspaper's self-professed adherence to codes of journalistic ethics, combined with the publication's cultivated image as a locally-responsible authoritative record, elevated its cultural status to that of an impartial cultural institution and effectively transcended the political and commercial motives of its ownership.

A reciprocal relationship therefore existed between the public architecture of journalism and the professional journalistic program. In the case of 20th Century newspaper buildings, a popularly-ordained form of quasi-institutionality validated an architectural projection of authority. In the imagination of many architects, then, the newspaper headquarters building became an opportunity for un-cynical monumentalization: a chance for the earnest pursuit of beauty with a clean political conscience. Simultaneously, some architects dared to be critical of corporate journalism in their responses to the newspaper headquarters brief.

Paradoxically, the newspaper's assumption of quasi-institutional authority coincided with the increased expansion of its own commercial interests and speculative capitalistic ventures. Not

so surprisingly, the perceptual transformation of the newspaper from political mouthpiece to impartial institution also coincided with diversification of individual journalistic agendas within the newspaper — in other words, with the recognition of popular demand for credible, politically disinterested or "objective" independent journalism. The concept of the "newspaper of record," originating in the 1920s, evinces the newspaper's emergent status as an unassailable and neutral cultural record, worthy of architectural monumentality [Okrent, 2004: 1].

The near-mythical status of the American newspaper as an ostensibly "truth-seeking" cultural institution, combined with the ever-increasing complexity of its architectural requirements, invited architectural innovation and resulted in an array of seminal projects and buildings during the first half of the 20th Century.

As will be shown, the introduction of novel, formally malleable program elements — especially speculative commercial space during the early 20th Century — simultaneously mandated innovation and propelled media architecture toward a monumentality that was validated by the newspaper's self-proclaimed status as a civic institution. The public architecture of journalism shaped urban space in major American cities. It was an integral part of urban life.

The newspaper industry initially required architecture to synthesize a quasi-institutional physical identity from a complex hybrid program. However, architecture's engagement with the news media industry was ultimately undone by forces of technical hyper-specialization of the newspaper building type, and by the real estate market-driven speculation that came to constrain the design of new headquarters facilities.

Long-Term Decline: Two Factors

Architecture's engagement with the U.S. print news media declined most severely beginning in the 1950s; this decline was linked to these two key factors:

First, the hyper-specialization of newspaper facilities built in the image of the "modern plant" after World War II prioritized efficient equipment layout over architectural or external considerations (i.e., urban design).

Second, the programmatic inclusion of speculative commercial space that began in the early 1900s grew to become the dominant factor in — and an impediment to — the design of later newspaper headquarters buildings. Hyper-speculation rendered the newspaper headquarters indistinguishable from generic speculative office buildings.

The majority of newspaper buildings built during this late era of decline were rigidly monofunctional (either exclusively industrial or exclusively speculative), encouraging a pattern-book approach to facility design that precluded progressive

media architecture — often rendering architectural and urban design considerations superfluous.

—

1.03
Research Methodology

In order to formulate an effective architectural response to ongoing transitions within professional journalism, it is critical that architecture's relationship to the industry be understood in context of its full evolution and recent decline. Architecture for the print news media has responded to changing locational requirements, technological developments relevant to printing and communication, and the clients' speculative investment tendencies over the last 150 years, resulting in a range of prevalent building types that may be observed cross-regionally.

Research was focused upon six major U.S. daily newspapers, each of which has responded differently to the collapse of the print media industry. Each of the selected newspapers has occupied at least one purpose-built, architect-designed facility, and has been in print since the mid-nineteenth century.

The New York Times, an authoritative and established newspaper with international daily circulation over one million copies, has responded by ceasing publication of its less profitable subsidiary brands, including several papers in New England. Additionally, the Times has consolidated all printing operations at its newest plant in the borough of Queens, while retaining administrative and content-production space at its new headquarters tower in Manhattan. The New York Times has responded to the print media crisis primarily through operational consolidation and brand-shedding (sale or closure of unprofitable subsidiaries).

Additionally, the New York Times Company has diversified its investments, focusing on commercial real estate.

The Washington Post, a daily newspaper in Washington, DC, has consolidated its printing operations to a single suburban plant, retaining its downtown Washington headquarters and editing space. The Washington Post has responded to the print media crisis primarily through operational consolidation.

The Boston Globe, a historically significant but recently unprofitable newspaper based in Boston, Massachusetts, has entered intensive organized labor negotiations with its owner (the New York Times Company), attempting to avoid closure as a result of corporate brand-shedding. It has consolidated all printing, administrative, and editing operations at a single facility. The paper is considering a cut in production (abandoning the daily format) in order to remain viable. The newspaper is also seeking new ownership. The Boston Globe has responded to the print media crisis primarily through operational consolidation and production cost-cutting.

The Rocky Mountain News, one of Denver, Colorado's two major newspapers, entered a Joint Operating Agreement with the Denver Post in 2001 and collapsed in 2009. The paper no longer exists, as either a print or electronic edition. It shared an administrative/editing building with the Denver Post, which remains in operation. The Rocky Mountain News responded to the print media crisis primarily through joint operation.

The Seattle Post-Intelligencer, following participation in a Joint Operating Agreement with the Seattle Times that began in 1983, ceased all print publication in 2009 and transitioned to electronic publication. The newspaper currently occupies a single building on Seattle's waterfront. The Seattle Post-Intelligencer has responded to the print media crisis primarily through joint operation and transition to nonprint format. The newspaper's print edition has closed.

The Chicago Tribune, sponsor of a well-known 1922 architectural competition, retains its landmark neo-Gothic 1925 headquarters building and a single modern printing facility. It has cut its staff, redesigned its print edition to reduce production costs, and filed for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy protection in 2008 following its sale to new owners. The Chicago Tribune has responded to the print media crisis primarily through workforce reductions, new ownership, and production cost-cutting.

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Note: **Section 2.03** provides historical facility siting trends, circulation volume and population figures for the period 1910-2009.

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1.04
Type Definitions

Newspaper Building Types

The types investigated in this industry study are presented in sequence of their development -- however, in practice there are many anachronistic exceptions to this sequence (significantly, the 2007 New York Times tower by Renzo Piano and FXFOWLE, a reprise of the 1920s Type 2 speculative commercial building). All of these types may correctly be called "newspaper buildings," though they vary widely in terms of their programmatic exclusivity and the quality of their design.

The primary newspaper building types, derived from a study of the major US newspapers listed above, are:

Type 0. Proto-Architectural / Early non-specialized newspaper offices, housing small-scale newspaper editing and printing operations in leased commercial space. Not commissioned by the newspaper.

Type 1. Urban newspaper headquarters buildings, housing large-scale newspaper editing and printing operations in one facility; production organized vertically. Commissioned by the newspaper.

Type 2. Urban newspaper headquarters + speculative office towers, incorporating large-scale newspaper editing operations plus large quantities of additional leasable office space (accounting for more than 50% of the total floor

area); production organized vertically. Commissioned by the newspaper.

Type 3. Semi-urban newspaper headquarters + modern plant buildings, housing large-scale newspaper editing and printing operations in one facility; production organized horizontally. Commissioned by the newspaper.

Type 4. Sub-urban monofunctional printing plants, housing printing operations only; production organized horizontally. Commissioned by the newspaper.

—

Note: Section **2.02** outlines typological criteria that were used to classify the newspaper facilities studied here.

Note: Section **2.01** provides an historical timeline, illustrating the successive development and proliferation of the types defined above.

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1.05
Study 1: Typological Evolution

Type 0: Early Nonspecialized Newspaper Offices

Though this study focuses specifically on widely circulated major American newspapers, it is important to note that throughout the 20th Century many small, local newspapers prospered but never developed an urgent need for purpose-built architecture of their own. Even at the beginning of the 21st Century, innumerable local newspapers continue to occupy commercial storefronts and generic light industrial buildings in both urban and suburban contexts. However, when understood in context with the full developmental history of the newspaper industry, such opportunistic inhabitation of non-specialized commercial space may be understood as an incipient stage of the print news media industry's eventual full engagement with architecture.

Configuration and Use

Prior to the emergence of specialized architectural types configured specifically for the newspaper industry, printing and editing operations were commonly housed in rented commercial space — sometimes even occupying attic space in residential buildings, as in the case of Denver's Rocky Mountain News during the first year of its operation. As a small-scale commercial venture with an uncertain future, the nascent daily newspaper in the mid-19th Century was generally incompatible with any kind of permanent, dedicated edifice. During this developmental phase, the newspaper office was a private and utilitarian facility: its public exposure was limited to the media document it produced.

Design Factors

A pragmatic need for flexibility drove the newspapers' opportunistic use of available space. Consequently, the early relationship between architecture and the print news media industry was incidental rather than deliberate — a loose fit prevailed between container and contents, owing to the flexibility of the contents.

The infrastructural lightness of fledgling newspapers was (and is, in the case of smaller contemporary newspapers) a major factor enabling such a loose relationship between the print news media industry and building design. In the 19th Century, production volume was limited both by the low capacity of contemporaneous printing technology and by geographical and transportational constraints on distribution. Until the advent of Linotype — a rapid, mechanically-assisted typesetting technology — in 1886, newspapers were printed using hand-set metal type and hand-operated letterpresses, occupying only about two to three square meters per press and weighing around 800 to 1500 pounds. As will be shown, the evolution of architectural types for the newspaper industry has been closely linked with order-of-magnitude increases in the size, automation, and production capacity of press equipment.

▲

Figure 1

A crowd gathers awaiting news during the Spanish-American War.

Photograph: University of Washington Libraries. Photographer unknown.

▼

Figure 2

Public consumption of news media during World War II in Boston, Massachusetts.

Photograph: LIFE Magazine. Photographer: Walter Sanders.

Evolution Toward the Purpose-Built Newspaper Headquarters

The diversification of the daily newspaper's audience was critical to the growth of circulation, a statistic that would drive the expansion of newspaper production facilities throughout the 1900s. Many vanguard newspapers of the 20th Century were, during their early development, politically homogeneous and narrowly targeted at specific demographic or ethnic groups. The Washington Post (initially supportive of the Democratic party) and Chicago Tribune (staunchly Nativist during the late 1800s, and later supportive of the Republican party) both experienced vehemently political phases [Keefe 1975 et al.]. As the first form of short-timescale mass media, 19th Century newspapers found a spectrum of audiences eager to consume politically aligned viewpoints on world events. However, the assumption of a neutral journalistic stance had the potential to further broaden the newspaper's appeal — and its market — while simultaneously increasing the publication's credibility.

The eventual emergence of large-volume, locally-dominant corporate daily newspapers, professing independence from any singular political agenda and formed through the assimilation of smaller newspapers, coincided with an increased demand for specialized architecture to house their larger-scale editing and printing operations.

—

Figure 3

Location of Newspaper Row in Boston, c.1900-1958.

Figure 4

Concentration of Type 1 newspaper headquarters buildings on Washington Street, near Old City Hall in Boston, Massachusetts.
Photograph: LIFE Magazine. Photographer: Walter Sanders.


STATE HOUSE
CITY HALL
250 METERS
NEWSPAPER ROW

Figure 5

Location of Newspaper Row in New York.

Figure 6

Concentration of newspaper headquarters buildings on Park Row, adjacent to City Hall in New York City.

Photographer: Berenice Abbott.


CITY HALL
250 METERS
NEWSPAPER ROW

Figure 7

Location of Newspaper Row in Washington, DC. Newspaper headquarters were concentrated near the city's political centroid, between the White House and the Capitol.


WHITE HOUSE
750 METERS
NEWSPAPER ROW

▲

Figure 8

Facade of the Chicago Herald's headquarters building, designed by Daniel Burnham.
Photograph: Chicago Historical Society. Photographers: Barnes and Crosby.

◀

Figure 9

The New York Herald's 1894 headquarters building. An architecture focused on the design of vertical surface / enclosure.
Photographer unknown.

Type 1: The Urban Newspaper Headquarters Building

Operating as components of urban news media districts, early newspaper headquarters buildings were extroverted, hybrid facilities: central fixtures in the political and social spheres of the city. Architectural expertise was necessary both to project the emergent quasi-institutional authority of the daily newspaper and to resolve the complex technical and organizational challenges associated with the hybridity of the newspaper headquarters building type. Due to the physically constrained nature of urban sites and the rigid specificity of the newspaper production program, architectural innovation was usually limited to the design of the building's facade. Functioning collectively, Type 1 headquarters buildings inaugurated the newspaper building's role in shaping urban space.

Configuration and Use

The first purpose-built architecture commissioned by the newspaper industry consisted of a hybrid building type: the urban newspaper headquarters building. Printing, administrative and editing operations were consolidated within a single building. Due to the limited area of its (typically constrained) urban site, the headquarters building type was vertically organized. With heavy press equipment located in the basement and sub-basement levels, the newsroom, copywriting and paste-up operations could occupy the uppermost levels, where natural light was more abundant. The building's intermediate strata contained administrative offices, and a public facade allowed for the instantaneous display of breaking news at street level.

Significantly, photographs from the early- to mid-20th Century indicate that public consumption of news mass news media at the street level facades of newspaper headquarters was a phenomenon common across American cities. In times of national crisis, from the Spanish American War (see fig. 1) to World War II (see fig. 2), newspaper buildings were universally accessible fonts of current information and played a role in the public lives of urban citizens.

Siting Factors and the Newspaper Row Phenomenon

The newspaper headquarters building was universally an urban type. Critically, these buildings functioned as components of news media districts that existed within most major American cities by the early 20th Century.

Access to transportation and servicing infrastructure, and — most importantly — proximity to centers of political exchange, drove the location of newspaper headquarters buildings. These common drivers resulted in the naturally occurring coalescence of news media facilities, usually within a few hundred meters of City Hall.

Boston (see plan, fig. 3, and photo, fig. 4), New York (see plan, fig. 5, and photo, fig 6), and Washington (see plan, fig. 7)

▲

Figure 10

A late Type 1 Newspaper Headquarters: the Seattle Post Intelligencer building at 2nd Avenue and Union Street, Seattle, Washington, built in 1889.
Photograph: University of Washington Libraries. Photographer: Curtis Asahel

◤

Figure 11

Incorporation of speculative leasable space into the newspaper headquarters architectural program. The P-I's building at Cherry Street, caught between Types 1 and 2.
Photograph: University of Washington Libraries. Photographer: Curtis Asahel.

evolved very distinctive media districts, in each case referred to colloquially as "Newspaper Row," and immediately proximal to each city's epicenter of political activity. Similarly, Denver had a "News Block," located at 16th Street and Larimer Street -- just two blocks from the building that served as City Hall prior to construction of the new Civic Center in 1919 [Denver Post Timeline: NP]. In Chicago prior to 1920, most of the city's newspapers occupied headquarters buildings in the Loop [Solomonson 2001: 20].

The centrality of such media districts suggests not only the rising rate of print news media consumption by urban populations, but also the newspaper's emerging role as a quasi-institutional informational instrument.

Design Factors

In contrast to non-specialized facilities utilized by "startup" newspapers, the urban newspaper headquarters building was a custom job: bespoke architecture. The relationship between form and program, between container and contents, had become much tighter -- building form was now determined by optimization of a highly deterministic internal spatial layout and conformity to site constraints, while the identity of the building was produced primarily through facade design.

By the end of the 19th Century, American newspapers were engaged in competition for credibility. Newspaper owners and corporate leaders recognized architecture's potential to project the quasi-institutional authority they sought. Skillful and critically respected architects including Daniel Burnham were contracted to produce identifiable, earnestly civic facades (see fig. 8) for such newspapers as the Chicago Herald to house urban editing and printing operations.

Particularly in the northeastern U.S., newspaper headquarters facades tended to adopt features of contemporaneous institutional architecture: in a bid for institutional authority, newspaper buildings mimicked libraries and bank buildings. Rhythmic arcuation, overall symmetry, and monumental axial entrances were common features.

The civic character of the New York Herald's 1894 headquarters (see fig. 9), designed by McKim, Mead and White beginning in 1890, echoes the firm's work on public libraries in the Northeast. The delicate Italianate architecture of the Herald's headquarters building projected the institutionality of the newspaper, while also celebrating the process of newspaper production. Plate glass windows exposed the press room to view on Broadway, allowing the nocturnal public to observe the "entire mechanical force...straining to get the paper printed in time for the early trains [Harper's 1893, qtd. in Gray 2007: n.p.]," and symbolic sculptural owls (with electric eyes) lined the cornices. Unlike most other institutions, the newspaper headquarters operated throughout the day and night — a factor often taken into consideration by architects charged with their

design. During this phase, architecture's involvement with the print news media was concerned both with the production of an institutional public image and pragmatic accommodation of changing industrial requirements. As circulation grew and major newspapers developed into entrenched, diversified media empires in American cities, plant expansion frequently required innovative architectural design. One noteworthy instance of such innovation occurred in the New York Times' construction of its 1888 Park Row headquarters building.

The new structure was erected as a concentric shell, built around the newspaper's continuously operational 1857 facility [Landau 1996: 151].

Evolution Toward the Headquarters + Speculative Office Hybrid

The 1889 headquarters of the Seattle Post Intelligencer at 2nd Avenue and Cherry Street in Seattle (see fig. 10) epitomized the late manifestation of the urban newspaper headquarters type, while the design's inclusion of rentable office and commercial space -- both on intermediate floors and at street level -- illustrates the growing importance of commercial real estate as an investment for American newspaper companies seeking diversification of their real estate assets. When the P-I constructed a new office building at 4th Avenue and Union Street (see fig. 11) during the first decade of the 20th Century, additional leasable space was again a key part of the brief. In

▲

Figure 12

The archetypal Type 2 Newspaper Headquarters: One Times Square.

Photographer unknown.

▲

Figure 13

Times Square, New York City. The newspaper building as landmark / spatial anchor.
Photographer unknown.

◤

Figure 14

Herald Square, New York City. Note prominence of the distant Times tower. The Herald's earlier Type 1 headquarters, designed by McKim, Mead and White, is the low building at the center of the photograph.
Photographer unknown.

the case of the 4th Avenue building, this leasable space was eventually occupied by a business college.

Though leasable commercial space was often a component of the late 19th Century urban newspaper headquarters building, it would become a more prevalent program element in the following decades.

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Type 2: The Urban Newspaper Headquarters + Speculative Tower

Architecture's productive engagement with professional journalism reached its zenith with the construction of newspaper headquarters + speculative office towers in New York and Chicago. The introduction of a malleable program element -- specifically, speculative office space -- was driven by economic forces, but ultimately produced two architectural side effects that would have a profound impact on the design of newspaper headquarters buildings. First, increased building bulk allowed these buildings to function as object-landmarks, and as foci for public space in dense urban environments. Secondly, the relative malleability of homogeneous speculative office space alleviated the rigid relationship between enclosure and contents that prevailed in Type 1 headquarters buildings, permitting greater formal experimentation. The visibility and complexity of these hybrid buildings required architectural design.

Configuration and Use

As improved building technology enabled the construction of tall buildings in the early 1900s, the newspaper building's vertical organization underwent a transformation. Newspaper owners recognized the possibility that additional, speculative commercial space could be inserted into the newspaper headquarters' sparsely programmed intermediate levels, while retaining the upper levels for the paper's own editing and administrative offices and allowing a heavily-constructed plinth to house the presses, which were now both more massive and more numerous.

In growing cities such as Chicago and New York, the real estate investment option was an important consideration for newspaper companies planning to expand their facilities: as Solomonson notes, office rental prices increased by 35% between 1919 and 1921 in Chicago [2001:32].

Additionally, advances in printing technology led to the introduction of new program elements, such as the Linotype hall, and locational considerations were relaxed with the introduction of telephone and Teletype communications technology. These technological factors would lead to both increased building bulk and less rigid site selection priorities.

The newspaper building grew vertically during the first two decades of the 20th Century: in New York, to twenty-two levels

or more. Concurrently, its hybridity was intensified through the introduction of large quantities of rentable, speculative commercial space, with a pronounced effect on overall bulk.

Beyond "Newspaper Row:" Times Square / Herald Square

The increased bulk of newspaper headquarters buildings led to greater public visibility and the emergence of iconic buildings such as the New York Times' 1905 headquarters at 42nd Street (see fig. 12). The presence of such landmark buildings was a powerful factor in the formation of identifiable public spaces in such dense urban environments as Manhattan.

Distinguished by their purposefulness, temporal dynamism, and organization around architectural monuments to "truth-seeking" journalistic quasi-institutions, "Newspaper Rows" and their more privatized progeny, "Times Square" (see fig. 13) and "Herald Square" (see fig. 14) testify to the central civic role assumed by American newspapers during this high period of corporate journalism.

In the case of Herald Square, the central architectural feature was the Herald's 1894 beaux-arts edifice. In contrast, the epicenter of Times Square was the new 111-meter New York Times tower, a hybrid newspaper headquarters and speculative office building. In New York, the vertical architecture of the Times Tower ultimately proved to be a more enduring and recognizable organizational element.

Design Factors

The introduction of additional building volume meant that a new kind of loose fit between architecture and program could be realized. The formally deterministic program elements associated with the newspaper production process — specifically the heavy, opaque press rooms and high-ceilinged composing and editing rooms — now constituted a relatively small percentage of the total volume of the building. Rentable, speculative office space was a more malleable program element. Both overall form and facade were liberated from constraints that had governed the design of earlier newspaper building types.

In the case of the 1905 New York Times tower at Broadway and 42nd street, the inclusion of speculative office space was crucial to the building's verticality. Without its speculative office levels, the building would have stood just 67 meters high. Adding malleable bulk through the incorporation of unprogrammed leasable space enabled the architects, Eidlitz and McKenzie, to treat the building as a stratified tower -- producing a landmark rather than an infill building.

The Tribune Tower Competition

It was during this phase of newspaper building expansion that the most significant architectural competition organized by the newspaper industry took place. In 1922, the Chicago Tribune invited architects to submit proposals for a new newspaper

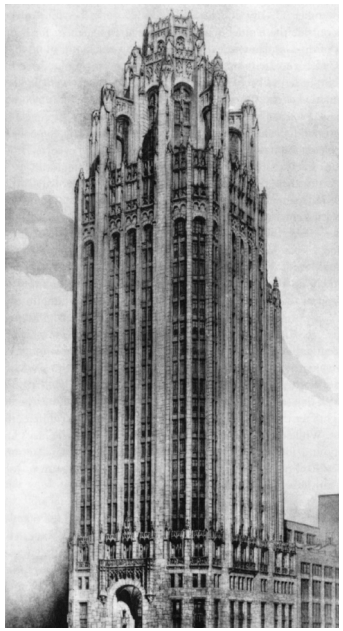

Figure 15

Winning entry, Chicago Tribune Tower Competition. Malleable bulk added through incorporation of speculative office space. Drawing by Raymond Hood and John Mead Howells.

Figure 16

New York Daily News Building, by Raymond Hood and John Mead Howells. Photographer unknown.

headquarters building. More than 120 entries were evaluated by the jury, including now-famous proposals by Eliel Saarinen, Walter Gropius, and Adolf Loos [Solomonson 2001:83].

The most significant commonality among the entries was their treatment of the newspaper headquarters as the three-dimensional object in urban space (as with the Times tower in New York), whereas earlier architectural proposals for newspaper headquarter buildings were often primarily exercises in facade design (as with the New York Herald's Headquarters. The newspaper headquarters tower was seen as an opportunity for sculpture.

Together, the 1922 Tribune competition-winning design (fig. 15) and the 1930 Daily News building in New York (fig. 16), both designed by Howells and Hood, illustrate the range of stylistic and formal approaches enabled by both skyscraper technology and the newfound malleability of the newspaper headquarters + speculative office building type.

Evolution Toward Hyper-Specialized Facilities

The forces of real estate speculation that had driven the construction of such buildings as the Tribune tower would be profoundly disrupted by the Great Depression, and newspaper headquarters construction would be effectively suspended from 1930 onward. In fact, the next major building boom for the newspaper industry would occur in the decades immediately following World War II. Already, though, newspapers had demonstrated an interest in sequestering industrial processes in their own specialized (and possibly remote) facilities.

Just before the Chicago Tribune competition, in 1920, the Tribune constructed a printing plant on the lot adjacent to the planned tower. Though not strictly monofunctional — it housed some of the growing newspaper's editorial and administrative offices during the transitional period before construction of the tower — the 1920 Tribune plant was primarily an industrial building, situated on low-value land outside the city's center.

The shift toward hyperspecialized facilities, sited at the periphery of urbanized areas, would be fully realized during the expansion of the newspapers' suburban readership following the War, enabled by technological advances made during the intervening period.

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Type 3: The Semi-Urban Headquarters + Modern Plant

The Semi-Urban Newspaper Headquarters + Modern Plant Building constituted a pivotal typological phase in the evolution of newspaper facilities. Combining the centralized, consolidated operation of earlier building types with the loosened spatial constraints of larger, less urban sites, these buildings were the first to emphasize equipment layout as the primary consideration in the design of newspaper facilities.

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Figure 17

The Post Intelligencer Building, a Type 3 post-war headquarters + plant hybrid, as depicted on an advertising brochure circa 1950.

Despite its hybridity, the Type 3 newspaper building never provided a productive framework for architecture, owing to a growing preoccupation with process efficiency and a concomitant increase in the determinacy of design requirements. The "tight fit" between the container and its rigid contents inhibited architectural engagement.

Configuration and Use

After World War II, especially in populous East Coast cities, suburban circulation of daily newspapers began a steady upward trend even as urban populations declined. Fordism came to the newspaper industry in the form of large-footprint, efficiency-optimized printing plants. Those plants built before the construction of the Defense Highway system (a program initially funded in 1956) were often located in regional circulation epicenters, close to downtown.

Plants including the Boston Globe's 1958 Dorchester facility, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer's 1948 globe-topped headquarters (fig. 17), and the Washington Post's 1950 facility on L Street NW, were essentially high-capacity, horizontally-expanded manifestations of the early hybrid headquarters type (Type 1), housing both printing and editing functions, omitting any speculative office space from the program.

Design Factors

The three critical differences between post-WWII Type 3 newspaper facilities and earlier Type 1 buildings were the relaxation of siting constraints, the emergent primacy of industrial efficiency as the most critical design determinant, and the resultant horizontal expansion of the newspaper building program.

Telex and reliable telephone technology enabled plants to be located either outside of the dense city center or on recently cleared urban parcels, where land was less expensive and larger building footprints could be realized. Horizontal organization obviated the need for vertical transfer of printing plates, paper, and other consumables, and allowed plant operations to achieve greater efficiencies. As readership of newspapers increased and production volume rose, the process of newspaper printing was given the same treatment as any other industrial process in the 1950s: efficiency and optimization were the paramount considerations. As a consequence of the industry's preoccupation with process efficiency, post-war newspaper buildings were frequently designed by engineers or by architecture/engineering (A+E) firms.

Aside from any qualitative effects, the crucial outcomes of the industry's preference for engineer-planned facilities were lost diversity and squelched architectural innovation. A pattern-book design approach became the norm for newspaper facilities.

Architectural design was still a consideration, but the dominant design features were often "tacked-on" symbolic elements such as the Seattle P-I's revolving, illuminated globe. The central message communicated by the architecture of these facilities was one of authoritative, self-assured modernity.

Siting Factors

As mentioned above, communication via telephone and Telex obviated the need to locate the newspaper headquarters building near the city's center. Urban renewal and suburban expansion both provided suitable sites for large, horizontally organized production facilities in the years following World War II.

The Type 3 newspaper facility was seen as a central distribution center for a media product. Scaled-up production and distribution areas required proximity to highway infrastructure and location near the center of the newspaper's increasingly suburban market area.

Evolution Toward the Sub-Urban Monofunctional Printing Plant

A new trend would arise as modern freeways and beltways transformed mobility in suburban space: the monofunctional single-level suburban printing plant. The New York Times was, by the early 1950s, printing more than half a million copies per day: this volume of production was high enough to mandate the construction of multiple printing facilities, transforming the locational considerations that had previously mandated epicentric sites.

Two crucial factors enabled the decentralization of newspaper printing operations: improved communications technology and interstate highways. The separation of the printing and editing operations of the newspaper would have a profound impact on newspaper building architecture for the following half-century, enabling hyper-specialization and hyper-speculation to dominate the design of such buildings.

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Type 4: The Sub-Urban Monofunctional Printing Plant

With the advent of the suburban monofunctional printing plant, the newspaper production program was for the first time distributed across urban and suburban space. Technology enabled each program element to be optimally sited without regard for physical proximity to either government centers or other media production operations. The singular "newspaper building," a centralized hybrid factory-headquarters, was obsolete. Despite the profound architectural possibilities born of these developments, the industry's now fully consummated preoccupation with hyper-specialized facilities left no room for innovative architectural or urban design during the late 20th Century.

During the late 20th Century, an unprecedented schism occurred in the evolution of the newspaper building type: large-scale printing activities were physically isolated from the content-production, editing, and administrative facilities of the newspaper. From the 1970s onward, the design of printing plants would be hyper-specialized, while newspaper headquarters buildings (an increasingly rare type) would be dominated by speculative commercial real estate program, often rendering them indistinct from generic speculative office towers.

Configuration and Use

Purpose-built to house modular, automated printing equipment, the suburban monofunctional printing plant was nothing more than a single-level sheet metal enclosure for machines. These buildings were constructed at minimal cost, and could be easily expanded or modified to accommodate new equipment. According to Yap's Guide to Classifying Industrial Property, the larger suburban monofunctional printing plants could be categorized as heavy industrial facilities.

Human use of the suburban plant was limited; pressmen and machine operators were the only occupants. The trend beginning in the 1970s was toward automation. By the 1990s, industrial robots had replaced most human labor at the largest newspapers.

In order to understand the extent to which press equipment dominated the interior of monofunctional plants, it is useful to compare the overall building volume with the volume of equipment inside. In the case of the Washington Post's 30,290 square meter high-bay suburban plant in College Park, Maryland, the four Mitsubishi modular presses occupy approximately 12% of the total building volume.

Siting Factors and the Press Industrial Park Phenomenon

The general diaspora of industry from American cities after World War II -- enabled primarily by improved interstate highway infrastructure -- meant that the industrial production component of the newspaper headquarters building would be similarly excised and relocated to suburbia, leaving administrative and editing operations behind in the city center. But such a relocation would not have been possible, or necessary, without significant parallel advances in communication and printing technology.

Teletype -- a technology eventually succeeded by T-1 data transmission -- allowed writing, editing, and administrative functions of the newspaper industry to be located in urban headquarters, while more spatially intensive printing operations could be located independently. New typesetting technologies, such as phototypesetting and "cold-type" lithography, were compatible with electronically transmitted media content and gradually replaced 19th-century "hot-type" (Linotype) typesetting technology. Presses, meanwhile, had grown to the

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Figure 18

The New York Times' Type 4 plant in Queens. Photographer: Jeff Goldberg.

▼

Figure 19

The New York Times' anachronistic Type 2 headquarters + speculative tower.

Photographer: Michael Denance.

size of large suburban houses. The eight Mitsubishi keyless offset presses installed at the Post's Springfield and College Park plants in 1998 each weighed more than 750 tons and measured more than 50m in length [Robinson 1998: N.P.]. Equipment of this scale required purpose-built enclosure.

While most American newspapers retained their early 20th Century downtown headquarters for administrative and editing functions, new monofunctional printing plants were most commonly sited where heavy rail and interstate highway infrastructure coincided. Newsprint and ink could be delivered directly via train, often on rail spurs that passed through the plants themselves, and fleets of delivery vehicles could make residential deliveries utilizing the new network of high-speed roads. The logic of "Least-Cost Point" distribution planning, a catechism of industrial planning in the 1950s and 1960s, ultimately meant that the New York Times could be most efficiently printed and delivered from plants in Edison and Carlstadt, New Jersey, rather than from a central facility in Manhattan. The common servicing and transport requirements of newspaper publishers led to a new kind of natural grouping: the press industrial park. The Washington Post's Springfield, Virginia plant shared a swath of industrial suburbia with several other publications including the Army Times and at least four commercial custom printing businesses. Meanwhile, the New York Times' Carlstadt, New Jersey plant anchored a number of printing-related businesses, including the corporate headquarters of Pantone Inc., until its closure in the early 1990s.

With the advent of suburban printing facilities, architecture's engagement with the newspaper industry was effectively dissolved. Situated among the industrial clutter of middle- and outer suburbia, plants were viewed by newspaper owners as utilitarian structures -- invisible machine sheds to house increasingly automated and massive equipment. Most took the form of unarticulated sheet metal boxes: signage was often the only element that distinguished a newspaper press building from its formally similar industrial neighbors.

Design Factors

Despite the scale of the monofunctional suburban printing plant -- often on the order of several hectares -- and its necessary proximity to important vehicular thoroughfares, it was rarely seen as either corporate branding opportunity or as an opportunity to project any sort of civic institutionality. Indeed, the only significant post-World War II architectural commission for an American newspaper plant was undertaken by Polshek Partnership in 1997 for the New York Times plant in Queens. The executed project was, more than anything else, an exercise in the polychromatic ornamentation of an otherwise unarticulated rectilinear volume (see fig. 18).

The dictates of plant layout permitted little formal flexibility — in the case of monofunctional suburban plants, the fit between container and contents was skin-tight. Furthermore, the container was viewed as expendable and amorphous: it

could be incised, expanded, and modified at minimal cost to accommodate new printing equipment. Architecture was therefore limited to a surficial role.

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1.06
Hyper-Speculation and Hyper-Specialization

Two Illustrative Cases: The Times Tower and Queens Plant

Though significant as a modification of Manhattan's already superdense built environment, the recently completed New York Times tower in Manhattan, designed by Renzo Piano, represents neither a progressive trend nor a new typological development in the design of newspaper headquarters buildings. Rather, the 2007 building (see fig. 19) is the hyper-speculative apotheosis of the early 20th Century (Type 2) newspaper headquarters + speculative office hybrid building. Meanwhile, the futile architecture of the Polshek-designed New York Times plant in Queens (see fig. 18) illustrates the impact of hyper-specialization on the architecture of professional journalism.

Putting aside any formal criticism of these two buildings, it is possible to understand them as divergent architectural responses to the contemporary state of architecture's engagement with professional journalism. The New York Times buildings are the products of over-specialization and and over-speculation, as manifested in the contemporary architecture of journalism.

Hyper-Speculation: Dominance of Speculative Program

The Times tower embodies two central concerns of the contemporary, early 21st Century newspaper industry: real estate asset diversification and spatial flexibility. These concerns are evident in the Times' occupation of leased commercial space in lieu of outright facility ownership. Of the building's 143,000

square meters of interior floors pace, in 2008 the New York Times Company occupied 90,750 square meters -- about 64% of the tower's total floor area [NYT Annual Report 2008:n.p.]. Of the floor space occupied by the Times, 18% is leased from the building's co-owner, Forest City Ratner [NYT Annual Report 2008:n.p.]. Though still a headquarters + speculative hybrid, the speculative real estate program (occupying 48% of the building's floor space) so dominates the design parameters of the 2007 Times tower as to be a major constraint, rather than an opportunity for malleable form. As a result of this constraint, the principal difference between the Times tower and its early 20th Century precedents lies in the Times building's lack of articulation: as a real estate investment, the new building is more concerned with the capture of available space than with form. As in the case of the early urban newspaper headquarters building, the architecture is mostly concerned with surface. The present scenario effectively precludes any kind of formal experimentation as an option.

Architecture resigns itself to the limited operational zone of building enclosure.

Urban Dislocation

The Times tower is primarily a speculative office tower, secondarily an intended icon. It is significant, then, that the new tower's dislocation from Times Square compounds the building's impotence as landmark among a sea of landmarks.

Meaningful connections once existed among the New York Times as a journalistic quasi-institution, the newspaper's assertively monumental architecture, and the spectacle of Times Square as a vital and purposeful public space. The three-way interrelationship among these parts has become illegible in real time -- wholly dependent upon memory. Once, New Yorkers had a newspaper, a landmark newspaper headquarters building, and a public space organized around the consumption of news media. Today, they are left with an indigent Gray Lady, a half-empty gray box, and the Naked Cowboy.

Hyper-Specialization: "Optimized" Enclosure

The Polshek-designed press facility in Queens, completed in 1997, is an aberration: architects are very rarely hired to design contemporary monofunctional printing plants. As discussed in section 1.04, these industrial printing facilities are hyper-specialized, designed entirely around the mechanical equipment they are built to contain. Architecture, when it is required at all, is allowed to operate only within the zone of building enclosure.

In the case of the New York Times' Queens plant, the high visibility of the building was a crucial factor in the Times' decision to hire an architect. The plant site, adjacent to Interstate highway 687, was recognized as a potential advertising opportunity. Indeed, the architect described the built project as "highly visible to a million passing motorists each week," and as a building that

"provides a new architectural identity" for the New York Times [Polshek 1997; n.p.]

The architectural design of the facility relies primarily on bold polychromy and supergraphics to establish this "new architectural identity," and to "dramatize the printing process [Polshek 1997, n.p.]." Both of these techniques are operate within the shallow zone of building enclosure.

Evident in the design of the Queens plant, however, is an architect's attempt to transgress the limited zone of surface and to more aggressively control building form. The factory's ventilation system is architecturally manipulated to become a rhythmic, sculptural order. The reception area and plant offices are housed in a chromatically distinct volume, articulated as a freestanding element. The futility of these formal moves – manifest as coarsely scaled, cartoonish cosmetic effects -- can be attributed in large part to the vast scale (over 500,000 square feet) and rigidity of the building's mechanical program.

Despite the architect's efforts, the tight ("optimized") fit between enclosure and contents – an identifying characteristic of the Type 4 newspaper facility, and a consequence of hyper-specialization – effectively defeats any architectural attempt to transgress the zone of enclosure.

Enclosure: The Residual Domain of Architectural Design?

In both the Polshek-designed plant and the Piano-designed headquarters tower, the fit between container (either "optimized" or maximized building volume) and contents (either robots or hoped-for corporate tenants, respectively) is so tight as to preclude anything but the shallowest of architecture.

These buildings exemplify two divergent responses to a program that limits architecture to surficial operation:

The Times' Manhattan tower exemplifies architecture's resignation to the design of enclosure.

The Times' Queens plant exemplifies architecture's ineffectual resistance to such a limited role.

Neither contemporary response – neither myopic acceptance of architecture's limited (decorative) utility, nor fruitless tactical resistance to such a diminished surficial scope -- can lead to sustained, meaningful architectural innovation.

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1.07
Study 2: Contemporary Scenario and Discourse

The Newspaper Industry's Current Predicament

As architecture's engagement with journalism was being eroded, the newspaper industry itself was slipping into a period of consolidation and long-term decline.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the newspaper industry began to contract as small newspapers failed and major newspapers merged to form media supercorporations. The systemic loss of diversity in the newspaper industry provoked federal intervention in 1970, when the U.S. Congress enacted the "Newspaper Preservation Act," which effectively exempted newspapers from antitrust laws — allowing them to collaborate and share facilities via "Joint Operating Agreements" — in order to avoid terminal competition.

These were not sustainable operating conditions for the industry in the long term. The 1990s were particularly volatile years. As suburban circulation spiked, many successful and optimistically-managed newspapers (including the New York Times and the Washington Post) built new engineer-designed production plants, as well as a few architect-designed headquarters buildings, failing to anticipate the imminent staggering declines in circulation that would parallel the rise of free electronic-network-based news services.

Understood within the larger historical context, the late (early 2000s)abandonment of print media in favor of new media

formats (e.g., blogs, "journalistic collaboratives," etc.) was only the consummation of a long period of contraction.
Today, it is widely professed that the U.S. daily newspaper has itself become non-viable as a commercial enterprise, as evidenced by the closure of newspapers in major cities and the transition to "online editions" at newspapers such as the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. Meanwhile, the Boston Globe and other regionally significant papers have been put up for sale by their supercorporate owners, their futures highly uncertain.

Trends in circulation suggests that only the smaller "niche" newspapers — "themed" or "foreign language" papers dealing with news relevant specific cultural subsets or interest groups — will survive in the long term, with the future of more broadly-targeted publications in serious doubt [Wertheimer 2009: n.p.].

Architectural Consequence: Typological Obsolescence

By the opening of the 21st Century, the corporate newspaper headquarters building had become an obsolete architectural type. Today, it seems very unlikely that any significant buildings, either headquarters or printing plants, will be constructed exclusively for the newspaper industry in the future. Production facilities have surplus capacity given the current low demand for print newspapers, and the newspaper as a human organization is also shrinking. Generally, newspapers across the U.S. have been caught flat-footed with too much equipment, too many people, and too much space.

The types of buildings that have historically housed newspaper operations are no longer suited to the scales and modes of production that are likely to dominate news media and professional journalism in the future.

Additionally, there has been zero innovation in the area of newspaper headquarters design since the 1950s, when hyper-specialization and hyper-speculation began severely to constrain news media building design. Following the dissolution of these factors as architectural constraints, journalistic architecture has arrived at a crucial juncture: never has there existed a greater opportunity to construct a conjectural architecture for a profession in crisis.

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Emerging Forms of Journalism

It must be acknowledged that the newspaper industry was, at one time, an industry that both invited and required architecture, and that the loss of the U.S. daily newspaper as a patron of architecture is a significant development in the history of the design professions.

Simultaneously, however, access to informational media has never been more pervasive and participatory. Architecture's application to emerging forms of media production and

consumption — forms that tend to be inclusive of non-professional participants — has yet to be fully realized.

And despite the failure of conventionally dominant media formats, professional journalism itself has proven resilient. Following the collapse of the U.S. newspapers such as Denver's Rocky Mountain News and the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, individual reporters have formed their own non-corporate journalistic collaboratives to continue their work [Pryne 2009: 1, Rocky Mountain Independent 2009: 1].

Architectural Consequence: Spatial Non-Specificity

The emergence of these and other unconventional journalistic organizations — organizations that do not conform to established corporate hierarchies — will likely require novel spatial structures, even at a pragmatic level.

The architecture of the 20th century newspaper headquarters consistently (as a typological convention) sequestered the supposedly autonomous space of the Newsroom from the "corrupting influence" of the Advertising and Circulation departments. As Robert McChesney observes, this monstrative "separation of church and state" was central to the construction of the myth of journalistic neutrality [2000: NP].

The new architecture of journalism will likely have fewer programmatic components as a consequence of the implosion of such compartmentalized and ineffectual corporate structures: its architecture will be less constrained — and possibly less predetermined by program.

The most obvious short-term consequence of this change, evident in the early 2000s, has been journalism's abandonment of its own purpose-built architecture in favor of more flexible architecture (more akin to the "proto-architecture" of the Type 0 newspaper facility than the bespoke architecture of the Type 2 headquarters). Stripped of corporate offices and relying on outsourcing to meet print media production demands, the journalism program can adapt to almost any architectural environment: journalism can (and does) happen anywhere and everywhere.

Even the behemoths — the "newspapers of record" — have demonstrated an interest in greater spatial flexibility as a response to volatile markets and high variability in the size of their workforces. The New York Times, for example, currently owns outright less than 15% of its newly-constructed headquarters namesake tower, opting instead to lease the balance of the generic office space required by the company [NYT Annual Report 2008].

Discourse: Conjectural Futures: Newspaper Industry

Given the spatial non-specificity (or indeterminacy) that has arisen with the demise of conventional corporate journalistic

organizations, what possible futures might offer programmatic constraints that could support the development of a new type of journalistic architecture? A survey of the contemporary discourse surrounding the future of professional journalism, and the newspaper industry specifically, reveals a few possibilities:

David Swenson and Michael Schmidt argued in 2009 that the newspaper industry, as a vital, informative component of American democracy, should be supported — and liberated from its dependency on advertising revenues — by a public endowment [Swenson 2009: NP]. A publicly funded architecture of journalism could present opportunities to hybridize the conventional newspaper building program with non-corporate, non-private-sector components.

In a similar but slightly divergent vein, Bruce Ackerman and Ian Ayres asserted in their piece, titled "A National Endowment for Journalism," that public funding for journalism should support investigative reporting, but not necessarily any specific media format [2009]. Their stance likewise evokes a hybrid building type for journalism that might incorporate educational components such as classrooms, or a publicly-accessible archive or library.

Alternatively, Maureen Dowd conjectured in 2009 that the newspaper might be destined to become a boutique media format, consumed by only a limited urban audience and produced in low volume [Dowd 2009: NP].

In contrast to the "public" journalism architecture that could result from a publicly-subsidized fourth estate, the architecture of the boutique newspaper headquarters might be highly commercialized: an advertisement for a status-symbolic product.

In Dowd's op-ed piece, "Slouching Towards Oblivion," Phil Bronstein, editor-at-large of the San Francisco Chronicle, is quoted in reference to the limited demographic that might consume newspapers in a long-term future that is consistent with Dowd's scenario:

"For people who still love print, who like to hold it, feel it, rustle it, tear stuff out, do their I. F. Stone thing, it's important to remember that people are living longer. That's the most hopeful thing you can say about print journalism, that old people are living longer." [2009]

Alternative Futures for Professional Journalism

The cacophonous discourse surrounding the future of professional journalism can provide any number of starting points for conjectural journalistic architecture.
However, it is clear that the "archaic" newspaper is already functioning as a component of an ever-broadening regime of participatory media formats: weblogs ("blogs") such as the Huffington Post [www.huffingtonpost.com] rely upon a steady supply of informational raw material, produced through the

sort of investigative reporting that newspapers (such as the New York Times, a frequently-sited source) are built upon, as the basis for the conjectural content they (blogs) provide.

As an alternative to both Dowd's boutique newspaper and Swenson's publicly subsidized "newspaper of record," professional investigative journalism may indeed have a secure long term future as a component of a multi-layered and non-hierarchical media regime.

The role of the journalist is already evolving towards one centered on the curation and stewardship of information. The journalist-as-curator will likely supercede the journalist-as-correspondent (a role that is easily assumed by "citizen journalists").

In whatever medium the information is transmitted to its audience — on paper or electronically — and in whatever volume, professional journalistic organizations will continue to be engaged in the deeper, more nuanced and thoroughly substantiated sorts of investigations that non-professional "citizen journalists" are unable or unwilling to undertake. Consequently, the importance of professional journalism is likely to increase, rather than decrease, as reportage and media control become more accessible to the lay public.

In summary, the authoritative "newspaper of record" is likely to be assimilated into an ever-expanding, ever-more-participatory media regime. Its format and delivery mechanisms will change with technology. But professional journalism will always need to retain a degree of autonomy in order to be useful as a dependable source of informational raw material.

The reliable, routinized professional production of an informational record that defines the newspaper industry could have new worth in a media climate increasingly characterized by ephemerality, instantaneity, and changeability.

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1.08
Observations

This thesis undertakes the design of transitional architecture for the newspaper industry in Boston, Massachusetts. The newspaper industry, as an international enterprise, constitutes a systemic phenomenon to which the fundamental arguments of this proposal will be relevant, regardless of geographic contingencies.

In pursuit of a fertile scenario for architectural design, the research presented here was structured around specific questions relevant to architecture. Based upon the foregoing case studies, it is possible to formulate some useful general conclusions, which complement the more specific findings presented within the typological analysis.

Study 1: Typological Evolution

What factors – economic, pragmatic, social, or otherwise – have historically supported productive architectural engagement with journalistic programs, either by triggering increased demand for architectural design or by requiring architectural innovation?

Architects' expertise in the organization of complex programs was pragmatically useful to the newspaper industry.

More significantly, emerging corporate newspapers exploited architectural design for its potential to project quasi-institutionality. The de facto institutionality of the newspaper,

as an "objective" journalistic enterprise, was a cultivated social construct that validated an architectural projection of authority.

The pragmatic and symbolic utility of architecture to emerging corporate newspapers, therefore, initiated architectural engagement with the journalistic program.

The most profoundly influential development enabling increased architectural engagement with the newspaper industry was the introduction of a malleable program element – speculative office space – to the rigid technical mandates of the newspaper headquarters brief.

Emerging possibilities in building design (i.e., the advent of the skyscraper), combined with the addition of malleable program, mandated formal innovation and the development of new types.

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As a corollary, what factors have eroded the architecture-journalism relationship, either by severely limiting architecture's zone of operation or by rendering it entirely superfluous?

First, increasing focus on specialization limited the perceived utility of architectural design in the construction of newspaper buildings. Architecture's critical role centered on its ability to synthesize identity from programmatic complexity and hybridity. The profession failed to redefine its expertise as programs became increasingly homogeneous due to external factors.

Second, the predominance of speculative commercial space in the newspaper headquarters brief, from the 1920s onward, eventually came to constrain the design of newspaper buildings, limiting architecture to a surficial role.

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What factors enabled the architecture of professional journalism to influence the shape and use of public space in American cities?

The urban role of the newspaper building has been in flux since the early twentieth century.

Naturally-occurring aggregations of newspaper facilities, in close proximity to urban epicenters of political and social life, constituted a systemic phenomenon observable in the majority of American cities. These news media districts, or "Newspaper Rows," were integral components of urban life, serving as public venues for the consumption of information from diverse sources.

As the newspaper industry consolidated, supercorporations (e.g. the New York Times) constructed monumental, autonomous headquarters buildings. Rather than functioning as components of heterogeneous media districts, these buildings acted as

landmark-icons, and imposed meaning and purpose upon the urban spaces they dominated. Times Square thus emerged as the fully privatized successor of Newspaper Row.

After this period, the relationship between the architecture of journalism and the city was effectively dissolved, both through physical displacement (suburbanization) and as a side-effect of architecture's diminished engagement with the journalistic program. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the newspaper headquarters building was no longer a distinct building type.

Public space for journalism had contracted from a district to a square to a lobby to nothing, and the architecture of journalism had become external to the city.

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What were the formal outcomes of these conditional factors?

The form of the newspaper building has been influenced by its siting, which has in turn been influenced by developments in communications technology and transportation infrastructure. Additionally, both the volume of newspaper production and the changing status of journalism in the popular consciousness have influenced the monumentality and formal singularity of newspaper buildings.

Fundamentally, the relationship between building enclosure and contents has oscillated between looseness and rigidity. Generally, the most productive opportunities for form-making occurred during periods of "loose fit" between the journalistic program and building enclosure, brought about by the inclusion on geometrically indeterminate program elements (malleable bulk). During periods of formal rigidity, architecture was concerned primarily with the design of enclosure or facade. Recently, architecture's engagement with the journalistic program has been exclusively surficial.

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Study 2: Contemporary Scenario and Discourse

What opportunities for architectural innovation have arisen out of contemporary conditions within the profession of journalism, and which of these opportunities remain untested?

The most significant change to occur in journalism during the 1990s and 2000s has been a shift from physical to digital media. Almost instantaneously, the newspaper industry's most recently constructed and hyper-specialized (Type 4) facilities were rendered obsolete.

There exists an unprecedented opportunity for architecture to define new building types and environments for emerging forms of journalism. The field is open for conjecture as to what constraints might inform the morphology and spatial organization of new types of journalistic architecture.

What architectural constraints have been loosened by ongoing changes in the practice of journalism?

Most critically, productive and distributive efficiencies are no longer the driving constraints in newspaper facility design. The manufacture and distribution of physical news media is in decline, and is unlikely to inform the architecture of journalism in the future.

Secondarily, the compartmentalized spatial structure of the conventional newspaper headquarters is obsolete. Recently, advertising revenues have ceased to sustain professional journalism as they did during most of the 20th century. Simultaneously, new forms of journalistic organizations are emerging which do not conform to conventional corporate hierarchies. Consequently, the advertising/corporate component of the newspaper building program can be considered a frangible or dispensable program element. The spatial segregation of corporate and journalistic functions (ostensibly to preserve "journalistic independence") is no longer necessary.

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What new architectural constraints might emerge that could give rise to new formal, spatial, and organizational approaches to the architecture of journalism?

First, emerging forms of participatory public journalism will likely demand more public forms of journalistic architecture. Existing sites occupied by newspaper facilities will require adaptation and retooling to host the new public architecture of journalism. These sites, frequently situated in the peripheral industrial districts of cities and dominated by infrastructure, offer a range of architectural and geometrical constraints that could inform the morphology of new building types for journalism.

Second, the volatility of the contemporary newsroom — a consequence of a fluctuating and highly mobile workforce — requires extreme flexibility. This requirement could inform the spatial organization of journalistic architecture: an architecture organized according to permanence or variability.

The archival function of the newspaper as a regularly-produced informational and cultural record also holds the potential to become a driving constraint in the architecture of journalism.

Following the obsolescence and abandonment of productive/distributive "efficiency" as the primary design consideration, the rising curatorial role of professional journalism, combined with growing public demand for informational "raw material," could require a capacious architecture configured as an accessible informational repository or archive.

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1.09
Enabling Narratives

The preceding typological study (Section 1.05) and survey of contemporary discourse (Section 1.07) provide fragments of a scenario that might give rise to a new architecture of journalism. However, this thesis refutes the validity of a singular "master narrative" or apologia as too rigid a basis for the development of conjectural building types, especially during an period of unpredictable change.

Instead, taking cues from emerging forms of participatory journalism, the thesis constructs a more resilient typological proposal through the collection of multiple "enabling narratives," each with its own specific architectural implications. Selected for their capacity to suggest or constrain architectural form or spatial organization, the three primary enabling narratives used as bases for the subsequent architectural proposal are:

Narrative 1 (n1)

The contraction and disappearance of public space for journalism, coupled with the recent emergence of more participatory models of public journalism, spurs demand for a penetrable public architecture of journalism.

Narrative 2 (n2)

The obsolescence of material production and distribution efficiencies as primary architectural constraints, coupled with the rise of participatory modes of journalism, requires the civic

transformation of the peripheral urban sites occupied by Type 3 newspaper facilities.

Narrative 3 (n3)

The growing curatorial role of the professional journalist, combined with the ephemerality and manipulability of digital media, generates a need for a journalistic architecture driven by the production, maintenance, and curation of an archival record.

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Conjectural architectural responses to these primary narratives (r1, r2, and r3, respectively) are outlined and diagrammed in **Section 4.1.**

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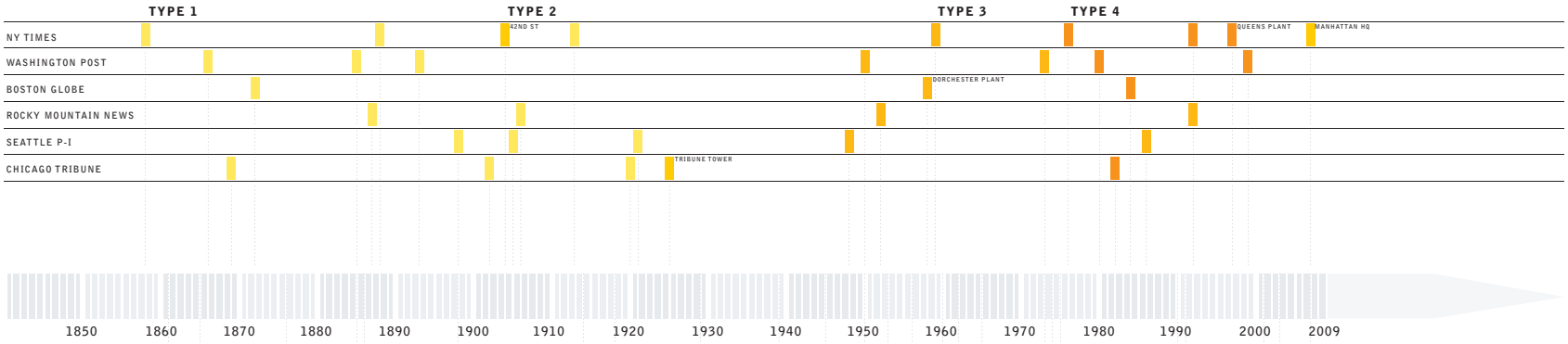
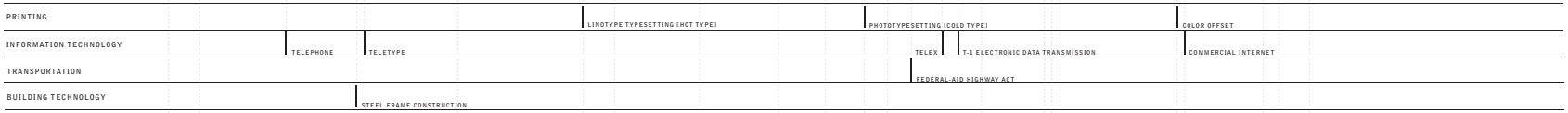
2.00
Quantitative Research

2.01
Typological Timeline

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDINGS

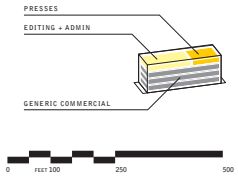


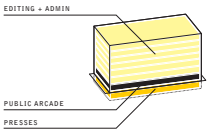
TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

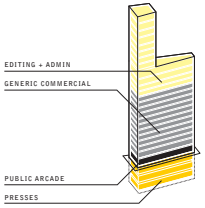


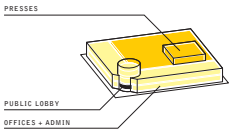
EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

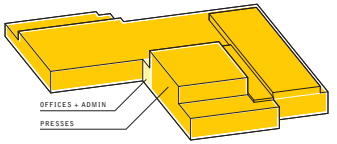
2.02
Type Classification Matrix











	TYPE 0 PROTO-ARCHITECTURAL	TYPE 1 URBAN HEADQUARTERS	TYPE 2 URBAN HEADQUARTERS + SPEC	TYPE 3 SEMI-URBAN HEADQUARTERS	TYPE 4 EXTRA-URBAN PLANT
SPEC PROGRAM		MINIMAL SPEC COMMERCIAL SPACE	>40% SPEC COMMERCIAL SPACE		
SITE CONSTRAINTS		CONSTRAINED / URBAN		CONSTRAINED / PERIPHERAL URBAN	UNCONSTRAINED / EXTRA-URBAN
ORGANIZATION	PROTO-ARCHITECTURAL	VERTICALLY STRATIFIED		HORIZONTALLY EXPANDED	

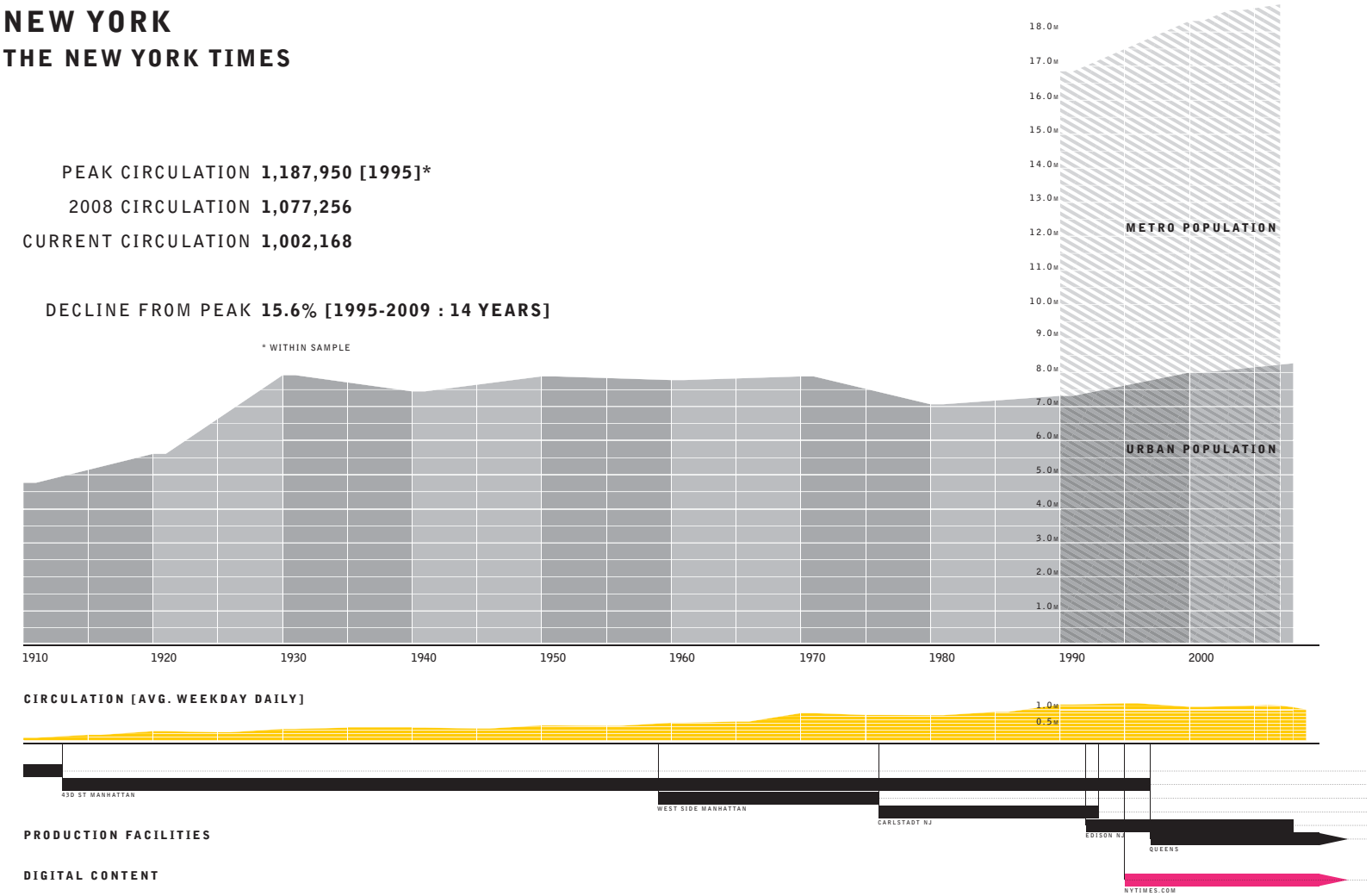
NEW YORK
THE NEW YORK TIMES

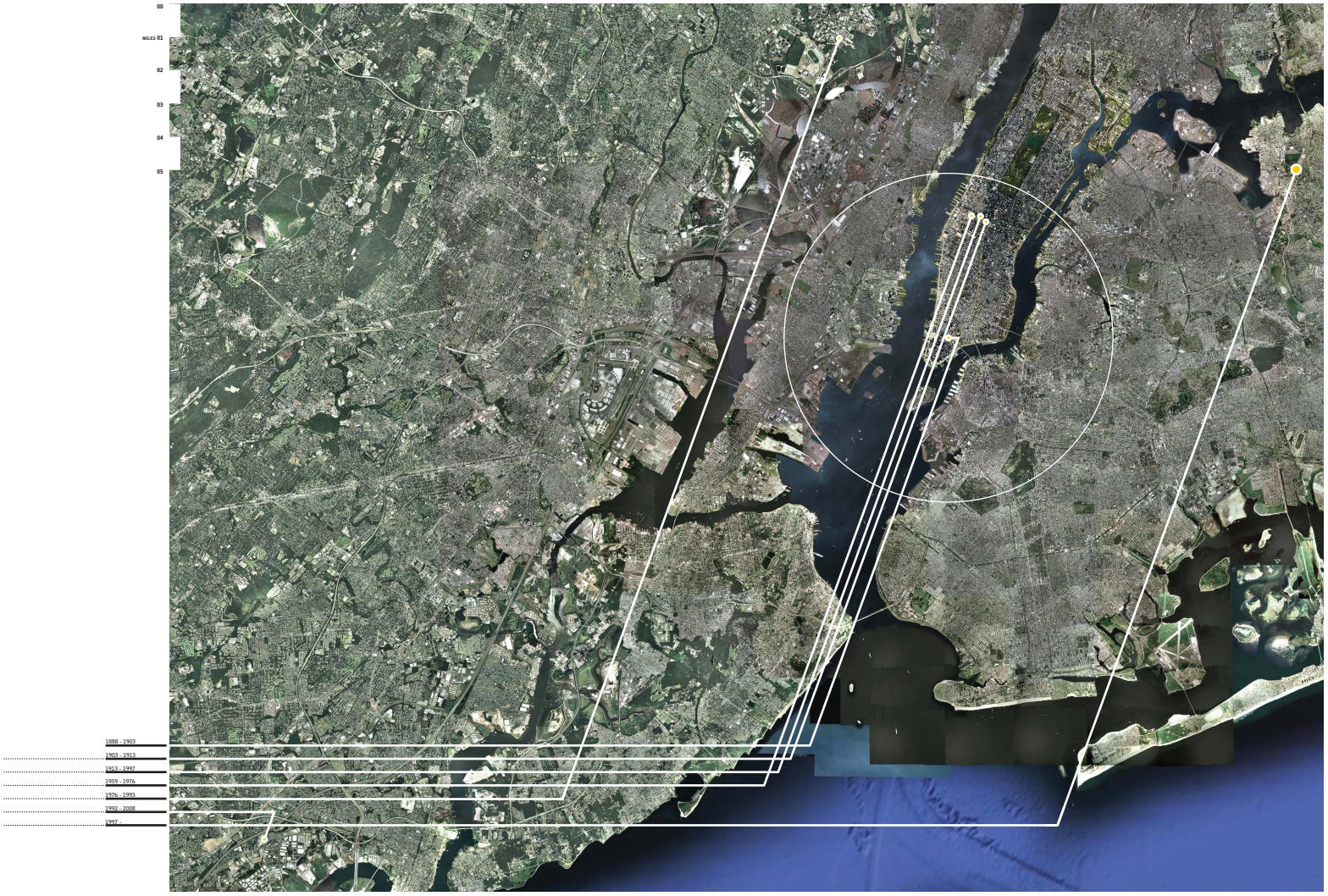
PEAK CIRCULATION **1,187,950 [1995]***

2008 CIRCULATION **1,077,256**

CURRENT CIRCULATION **1,002,168**

DECLINE FROM PEAK **15.6% [1995-2009 : 14 YEARS]**




00
MILES 01
02
03
04
05
1888 - 1903
1903 - 1913
1913 - 1997
1959 - 1976
1976 - 1993
1992 - 2008
1997 -

WASHINGTON
THE WASHINGTON POST

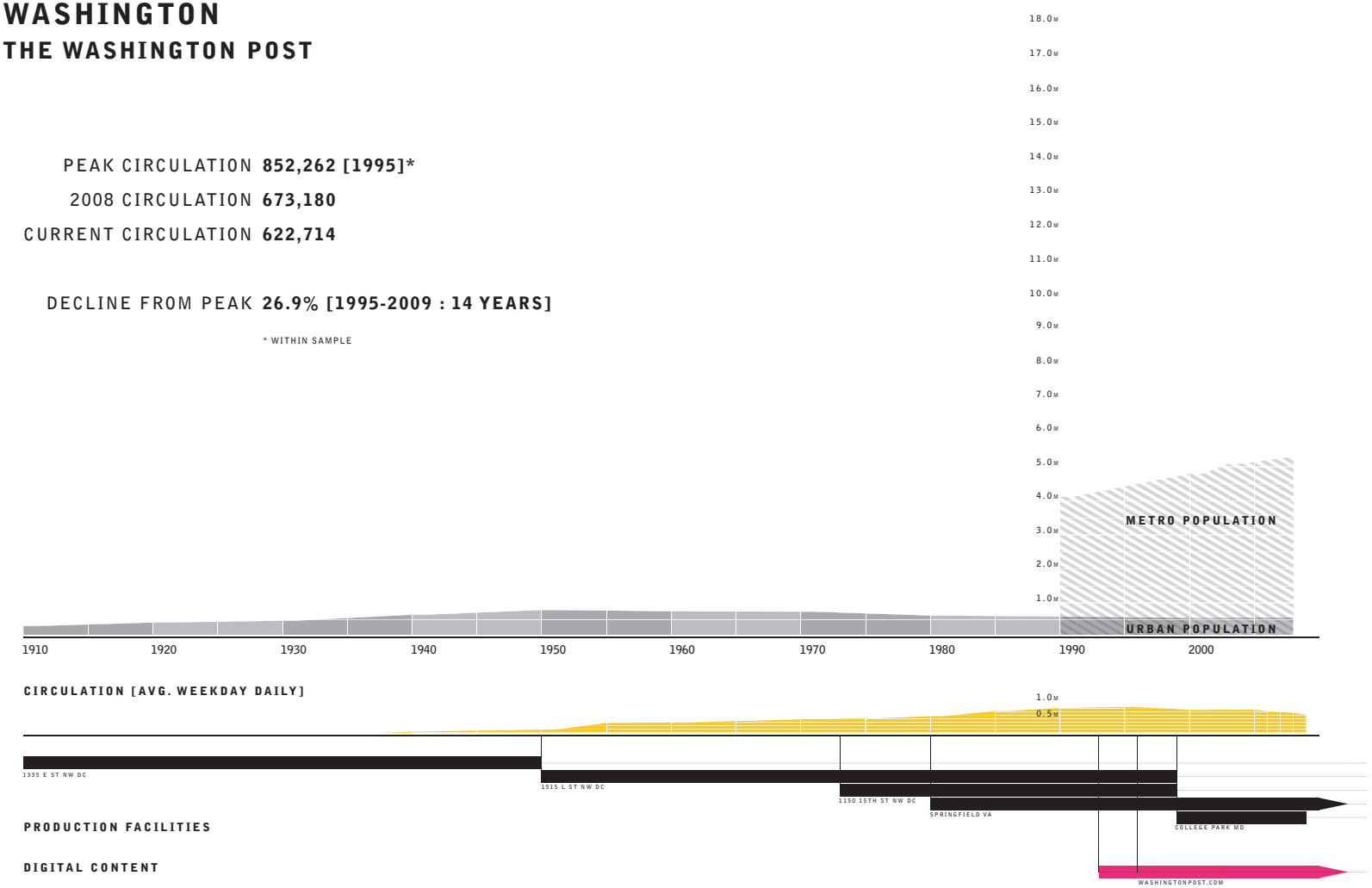
PEAK CIRCULATION **852,262 [1995]***

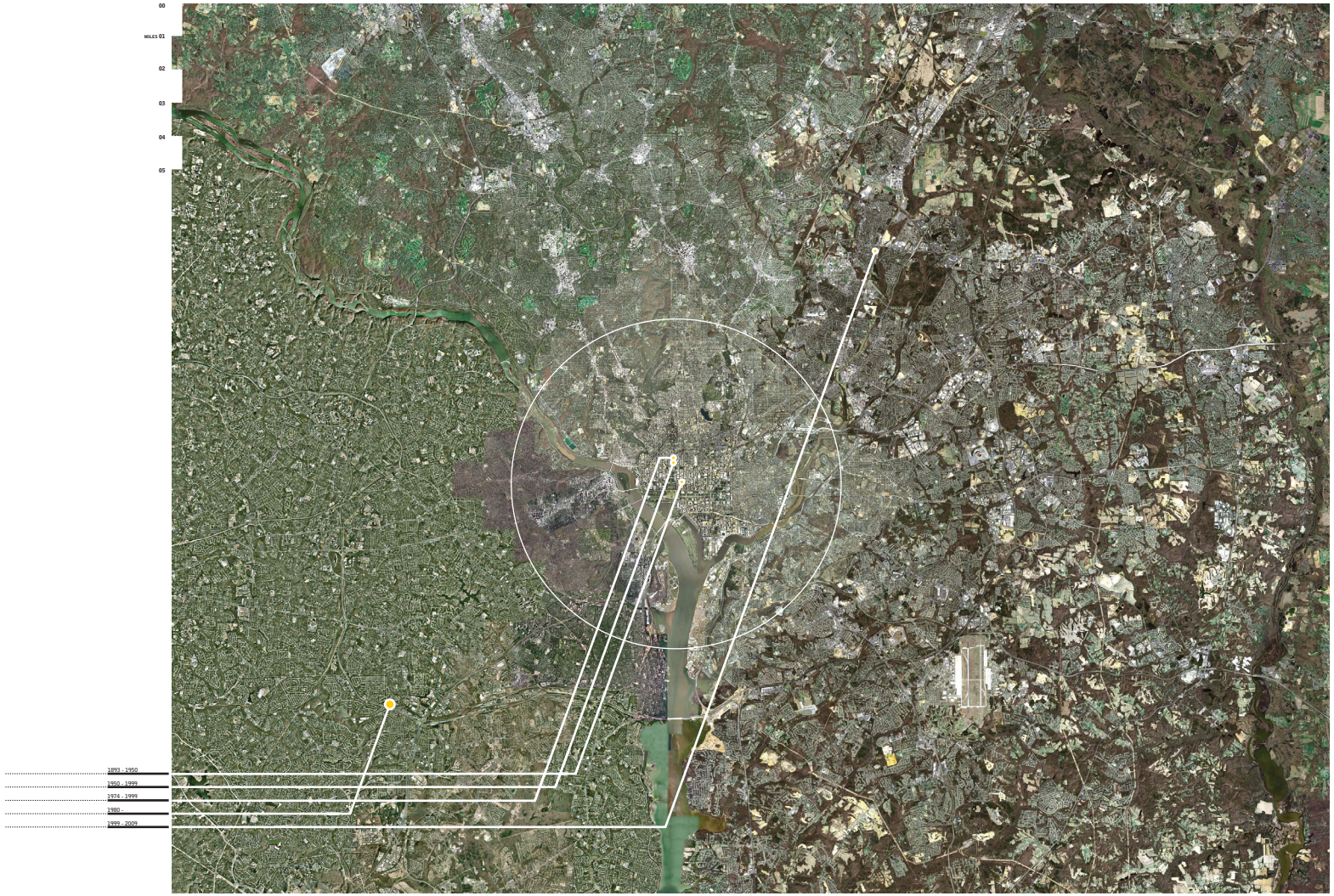
2008 CIRCULATION **673,180**

CURRENT CIRCULATION **622,714**

DECLINE FROM PEAK **26.9% [1995-2009 : 14 YEARS]**

* WITHIN SAMPLE




00
MILES 01
02
03
04
05
1893 - 1950
1950 - 1999
1974 - 1999
1980 -
1999 - 2009

BOSTON

THE BOSTON GLOBE

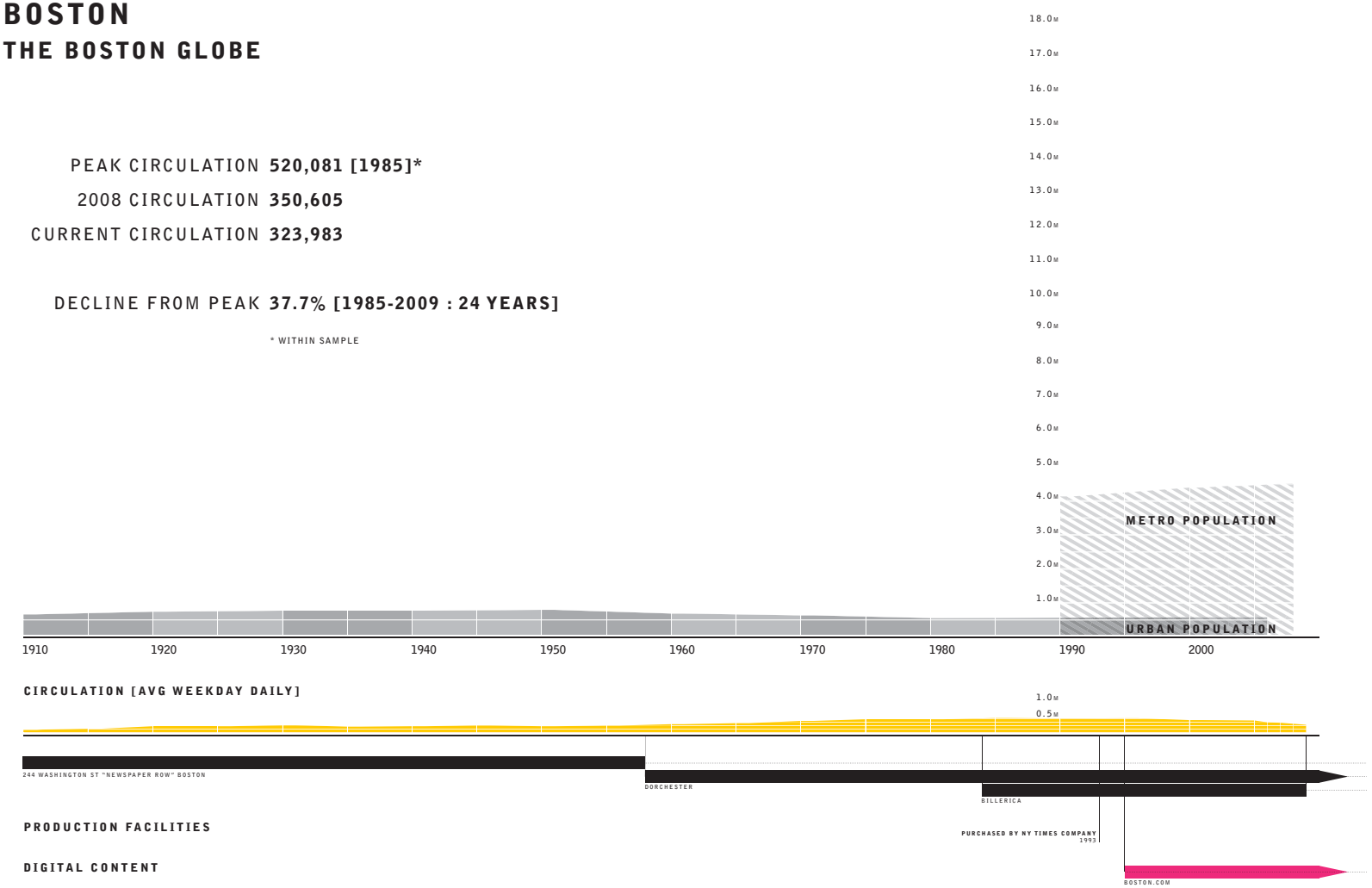
PEAK CIRCULATION **520,081 [1985]***

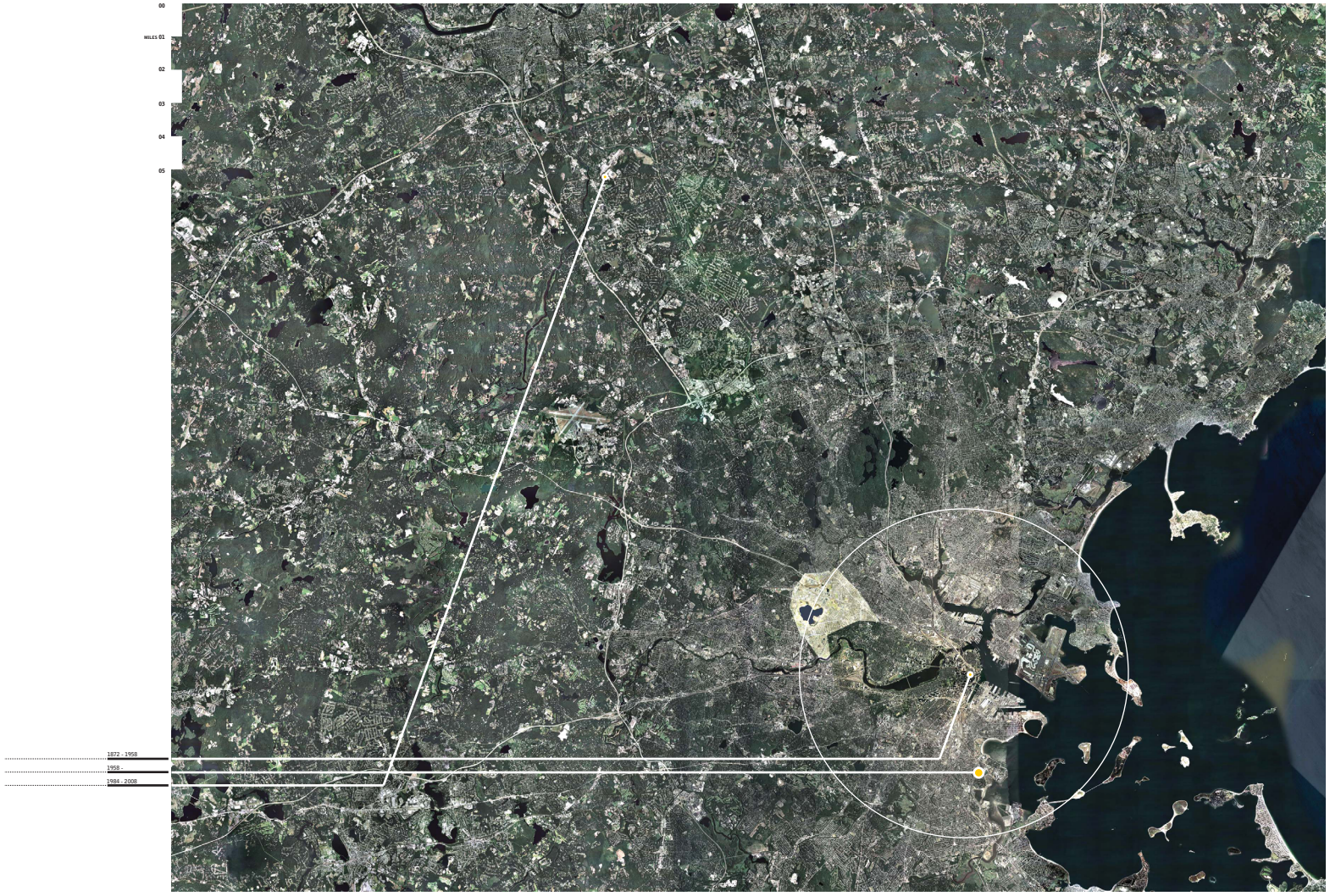
2008 CIRCULATION **350,605**

CURRENT CIRCULATION **323,983**

DECLINE FROM PEAK **37.7% [1985-2009 : 24 YEARS]**

* WITHIN SAMPLE




00
MILES 01
02
03
04
05
1872 - 1958
1958 -
1984 - 2008

DENVER

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

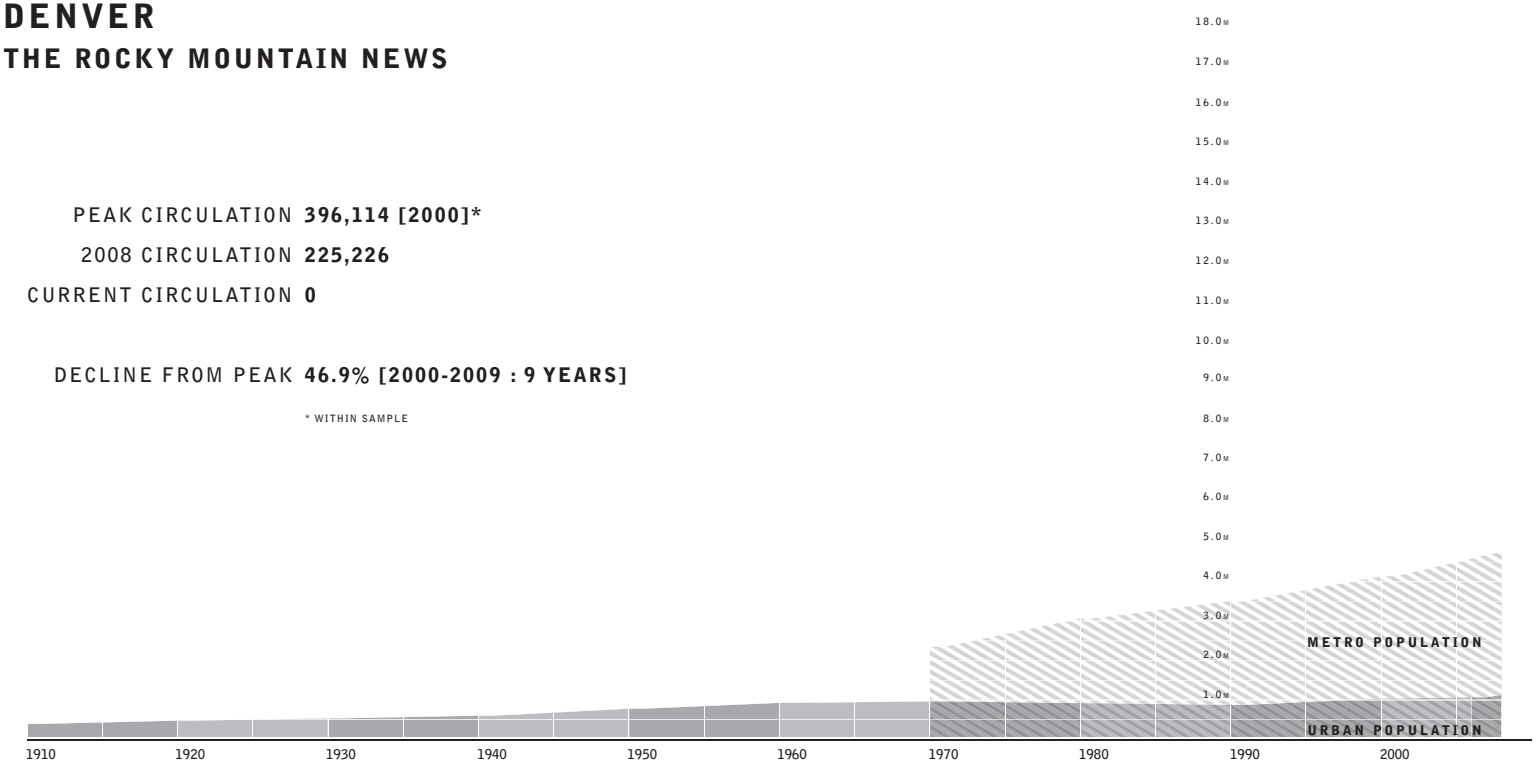
PEAK CIRCULATION **396,114 [2000]***

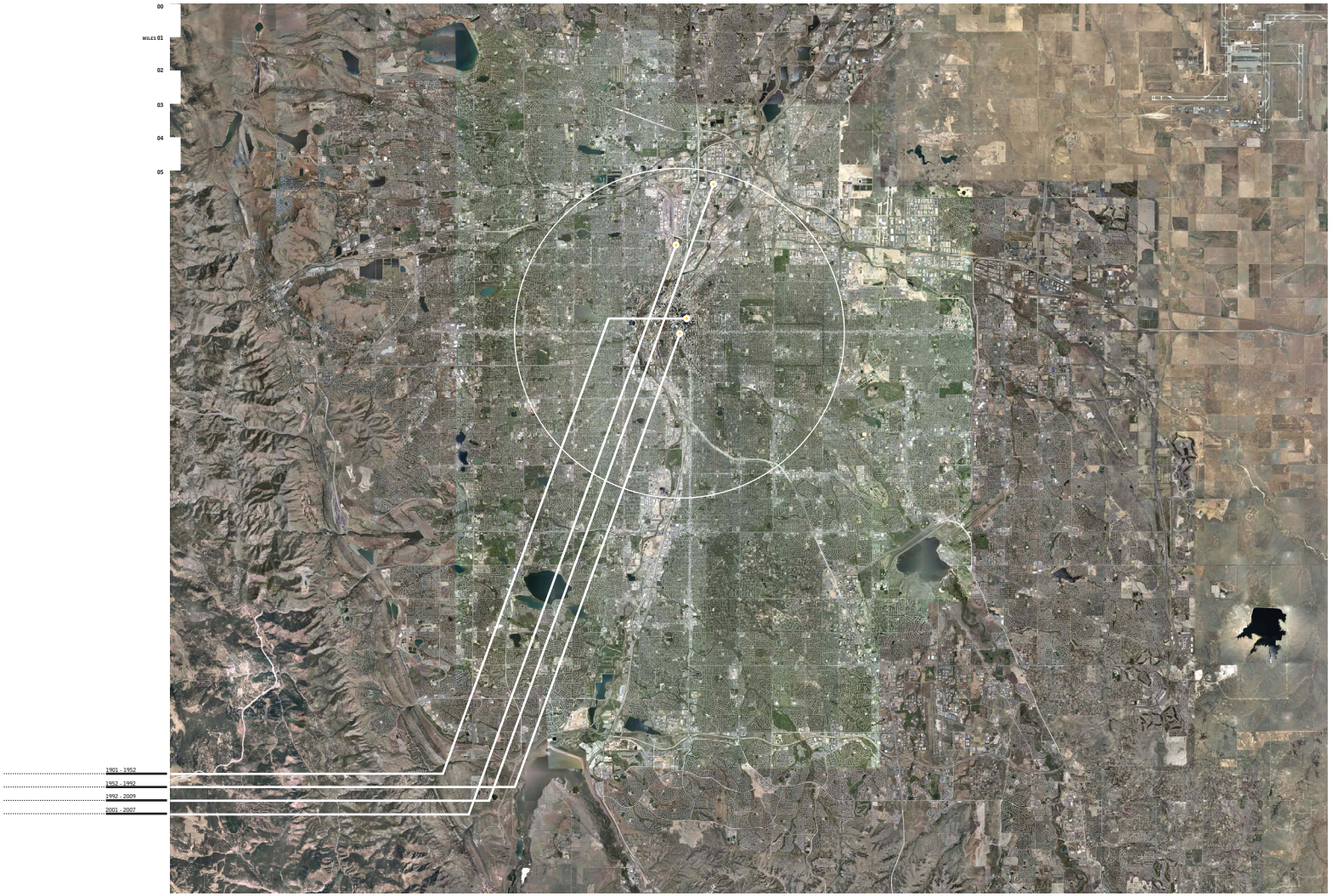
2008 CIRCULATION **225,226**

CURRENT CIRCULATION **0**

DECLINE FROM PEAK **46.9% [2000-2009 : 9 YEARS]**

* WITHIN SAMPLE




00
MILES 01
02
03
04
05
1901 - 1952
1952 - 1992
1992 - 2009
2001 - 2007

SEATTLE

THE SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

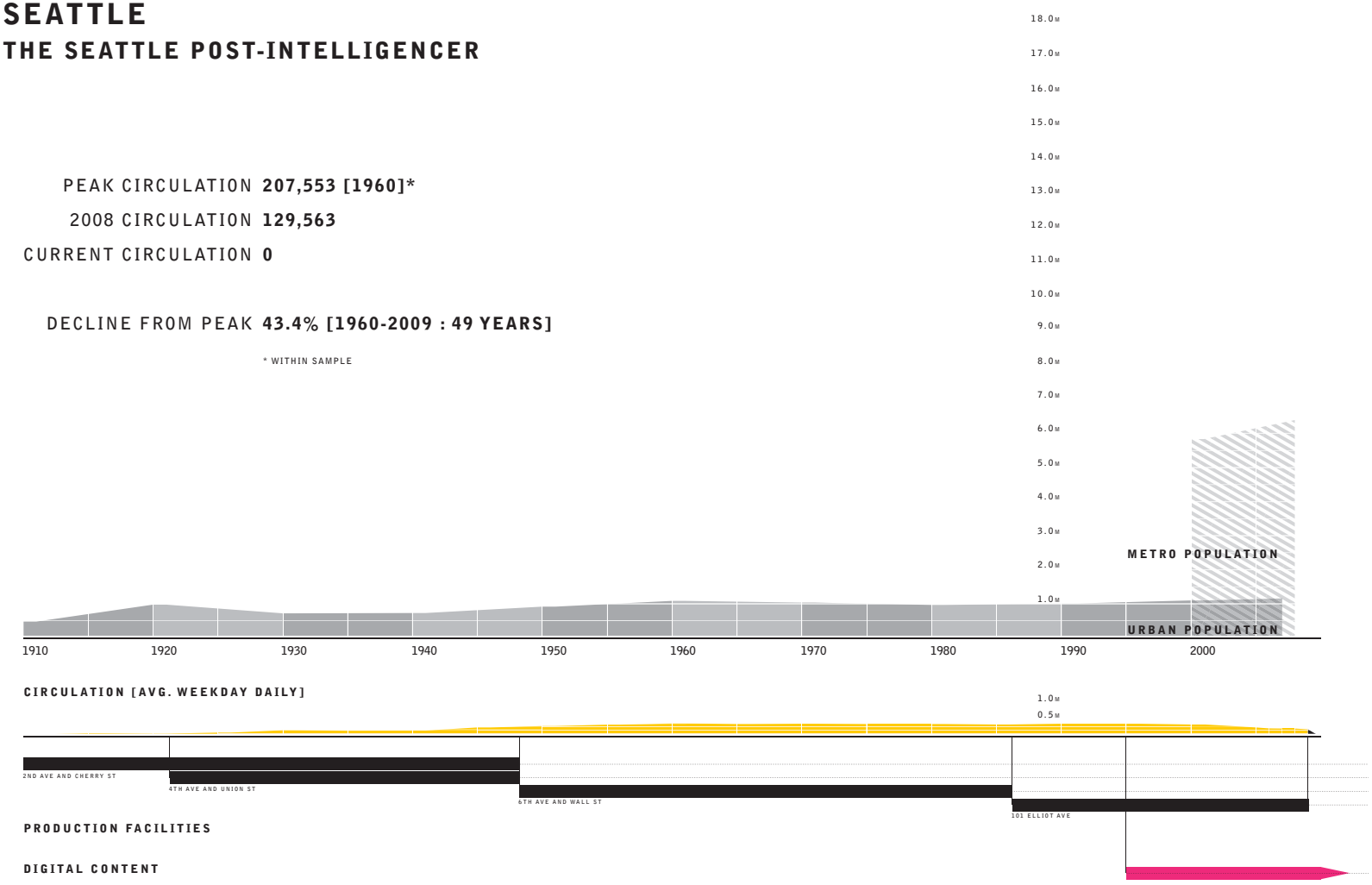
PEAK CIRCULATION **207,553 [1960]***

2008 CIRCULATION **129,563**

CURRENT CIRCULATION **0**

DECLINE FROM PEAK **43.4% [1960-2009 : 49 YEARS]**

* WITHIN SAMPLE




00
MILES 01
02
03
04
05
1898 - 1948
1921 - 1948
1948 - 1987
1987 - 2009

CHICAGO

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

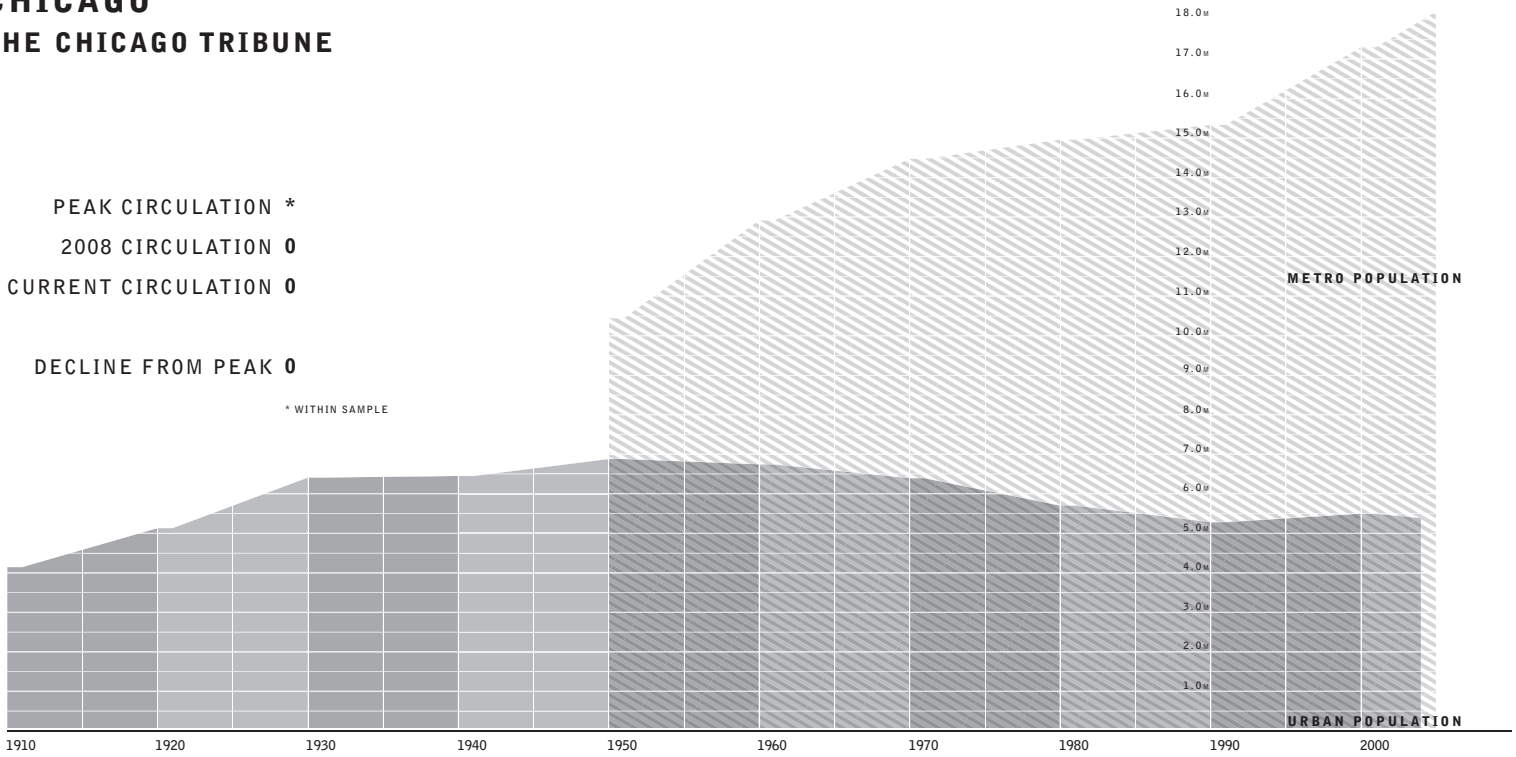
PEAK CIRCULATION *

2008 CIRCULATION 0

CURRENT CIRCULATION 0

DECLINE FROM PEAK 0

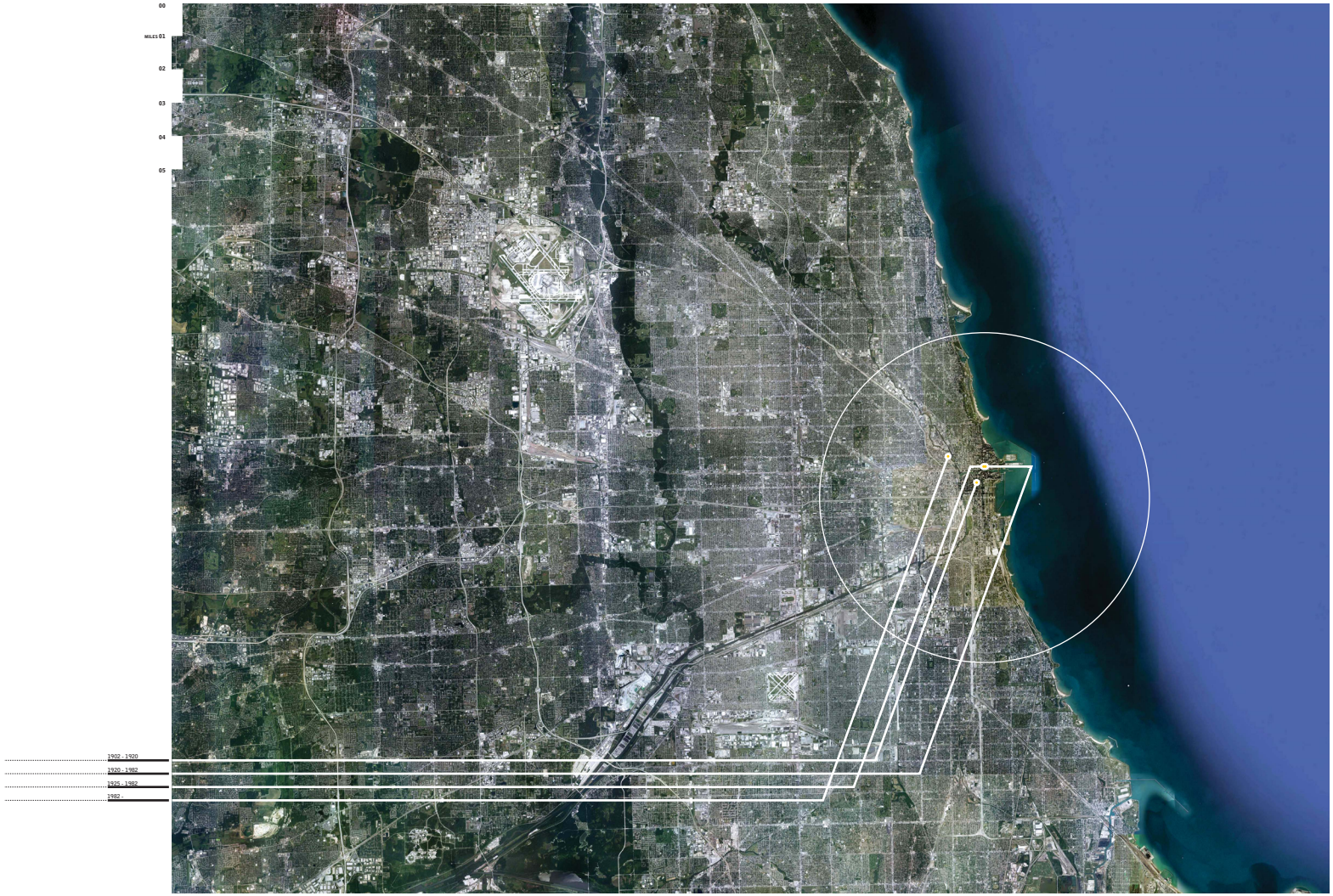
* WITHIN SAMPLE



CIRCULATION [AVG. WEEKDAY DAILY]

PRODUCTION FACILITIES

DIGITAL CONTENT


00
MILES 01
02
03
04
05
1902 - 1920
1920 - 1982
1925 - 1982
1982 -

3.00
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3.01
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Contemporary Source: Explains progression of labor/management negotiations. Does not detail the agreement between union leaders and management, but confirms that the Globe will continue operating.

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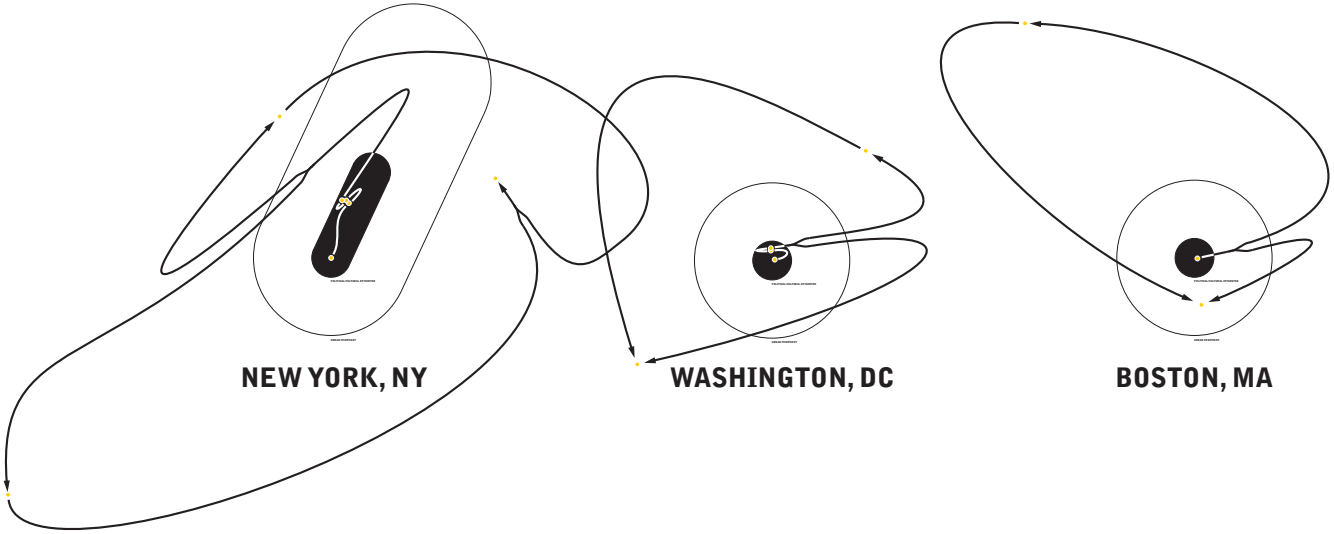
—

4.00
Architectural Proposal

4.01
Enabling Narrative 1: Contraction + Fragmentation of Public Space for Journalism

100 **Abstracted diagrams illustrating the incremental migration of newspaper facilities toward peripheral urban areas.** ►



NEW YORK, NY

WASHINGTON, DC

BOSTON, MA

DENVER, CO

SEATTLE, WA

CHICAGO, IL

4.011
Conjectural Response 1: Expansion of Public Space for Journalism

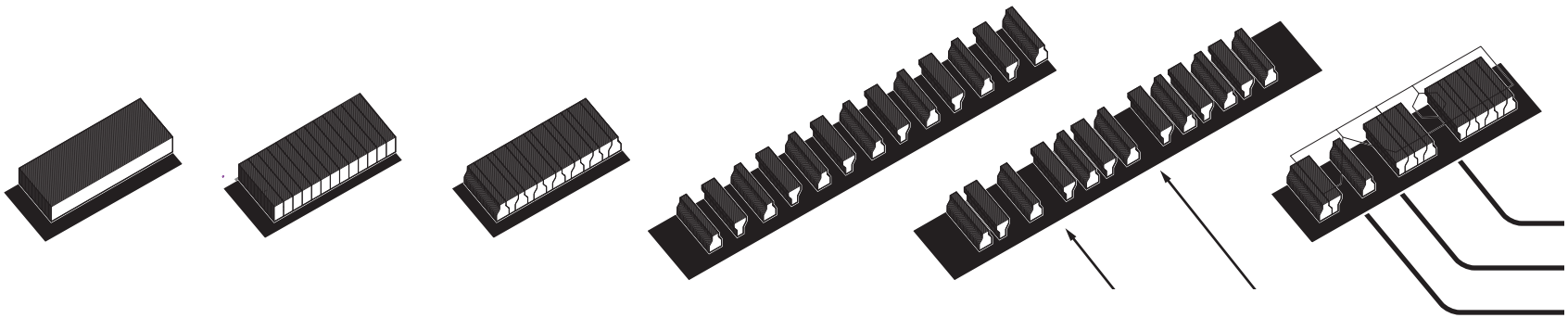
102

The building volume is organized into 13 discrete sub-volumes; each is a self-contained archival environment. ►

The voids between the volumes are organized to expand public space at street level and permit access to the upper levels of the building/ landscape.

The division of the archival space (housing an automated, rack-supported warehouse for the storage of physical media) permits the archiving of up to 13 different media types.

Structurally, each Y-shaped volume is a freestanding building, supported by the densely cross-braced storage racks it contains (see sections).



01 ORIGIN

02 PARTITION

03 INTERLOCK

04 DISAGGREGATE

05 MODULATE / RESPOND

06 RE-ASSEMBLE

4.02
Enabling Narrative 2: Transition from Material Throughput to Informational Exchange

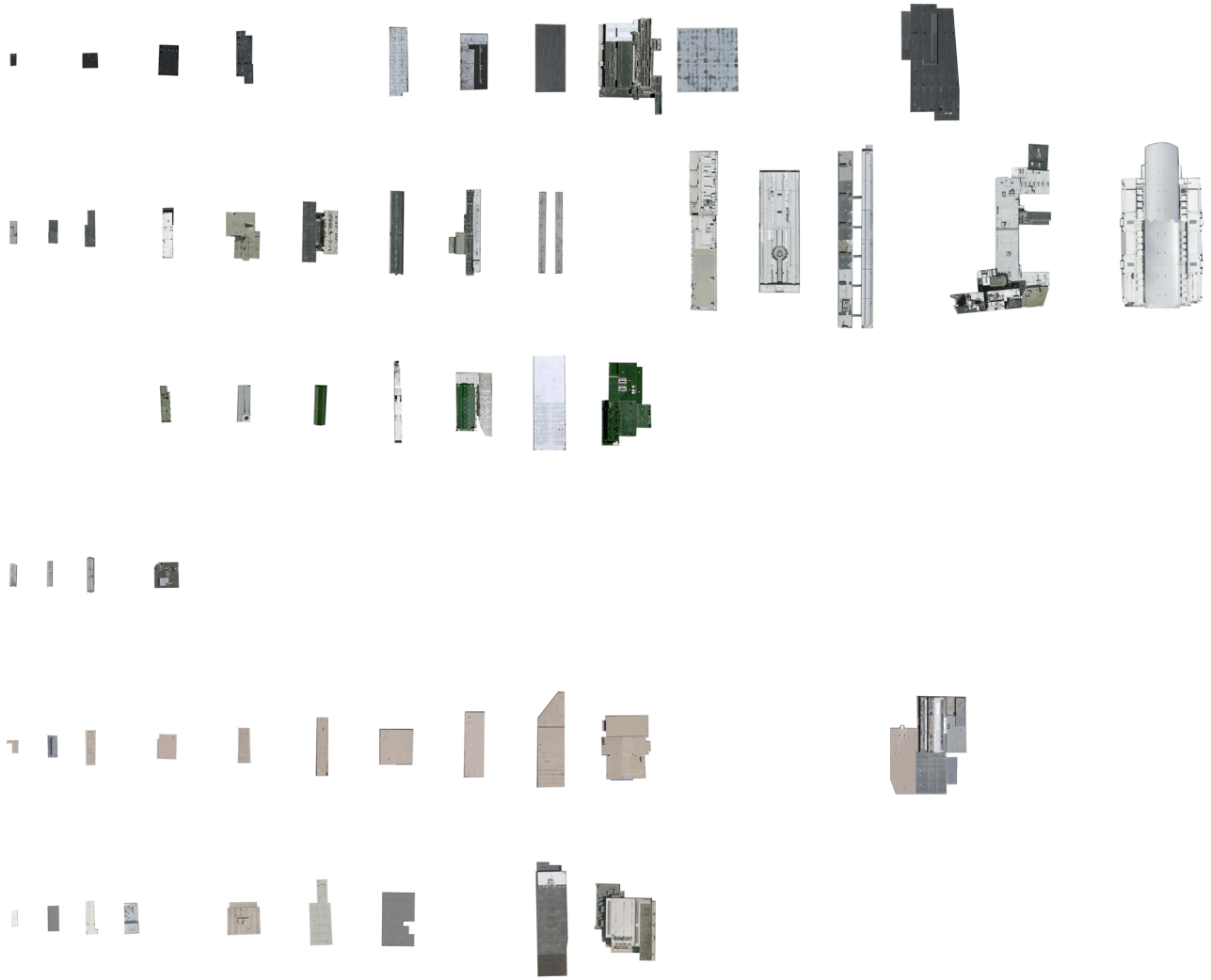
104 **Bar building morphology in the peripheral urban zone.** ►

In the six case studies that were conducted, Type 3 and Type 4 newspapeper facilities consistently occupied peripheral urban sites, where the predominant building morphology was the large-footprint "bar building."



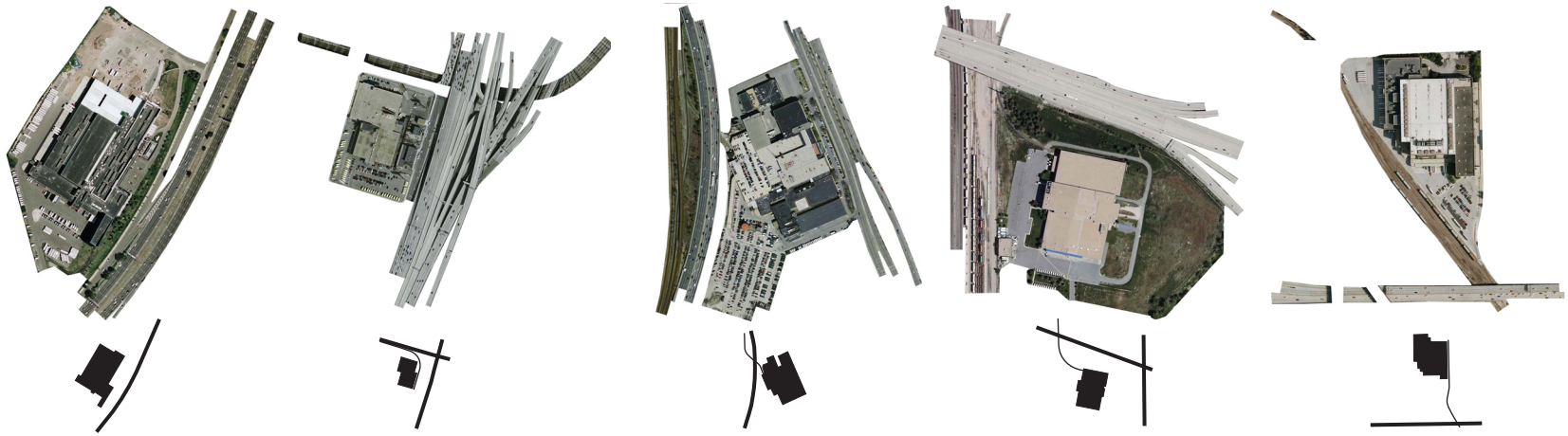






106 **Hyper-rational Type 3 / Type 4 newspaper facility sites.** ►

Preoccupation with material "efficiency" and plant operation over the past 50 years has led to a prolific site type, characterized by immediate adjacency to major transportation infrastructure, rectilinear site geometry, and peripheral urban location relative to the city.



4.021
Conjectural Response 2: Civic Transformation of the Hyper-Rational Site

108

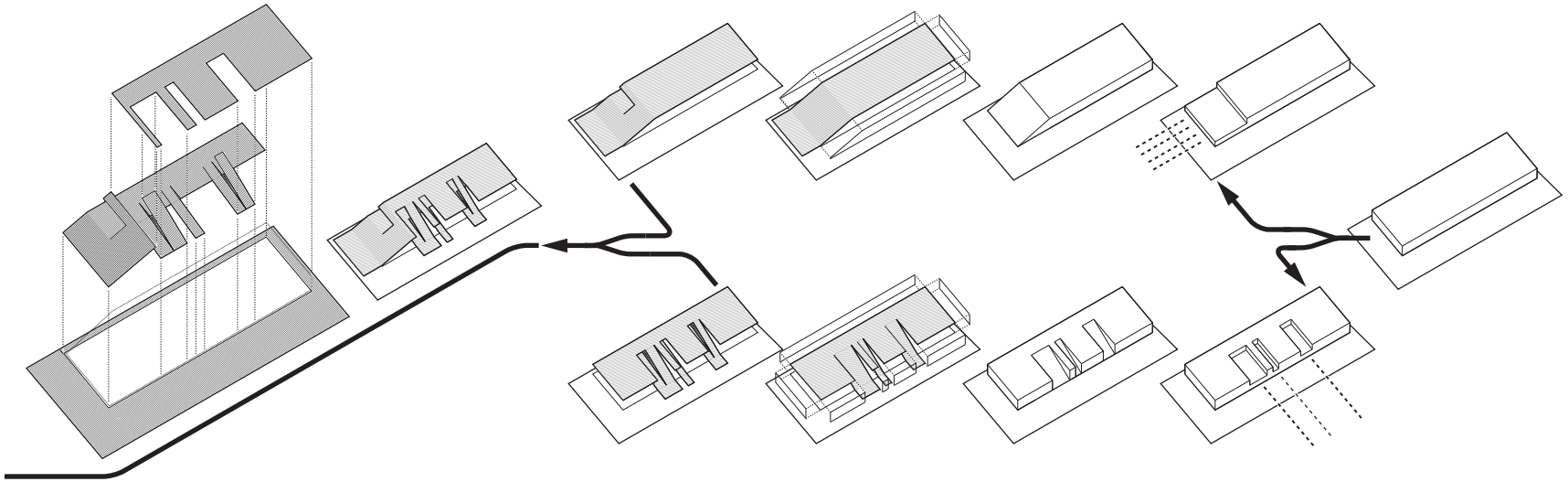
The rectilinear building volume is cross-cut and organized into 13 discrete sub-volumes; each is a self-contained archival environment. Together these sub-volumes generate three public terrains, effectively multiplying the rectilinear site into a three-dimensional extension of public space.

The primordial geometry of the bar building is subjected to manipulation along two axes: the product is a fully penetrable volume, oriented toward the city and organized into three distinct levels.

The lower terrain is given over to "transformational programs:" short-term uses that may change as the dying industrial district is redeveloped.

The middle terrain provides unenclosed public circulation access to the archive.

The upper terrain is also a publicly accessible, unenclosed terrain, modulated to create distributed interior spaces to house an aggregation of professional journalistic organizations.


07 3X GROUND
06 INTERFERE
05 MAKE GROUND 3
04 MAKE GROUND 2
03 VERT. PATH
02 INFLECT
01 ORIGIN

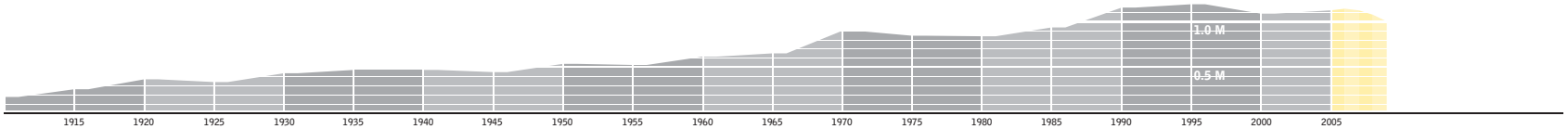
4.03
Enabling Narrative 3: Emerging Curatorial Role of Professional Journalism

110 **Declining production volume, observed in all six case studies.** ►

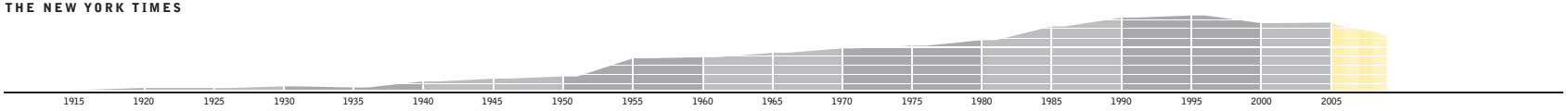
This enabling narrative, derived from the discourse surrounding the future of journalism, was developed in **Section 1.08** and **Section 1.09.**

Declining production volume, as illustrated in the chart at right, further substantiates the assertion that the role of the journalist is shifting away from conventional models and towards the curation, rather than simply the dissemination, of informational media.

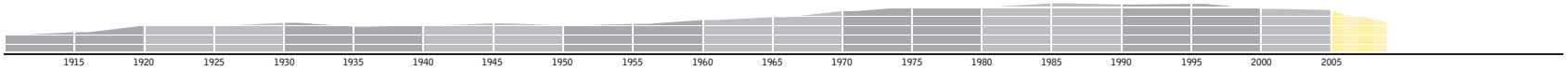
Furthermore, owing to this sustained and systemic decline in production volume, the factory model is no longer a valid pattern for the design of journalistic architecture.



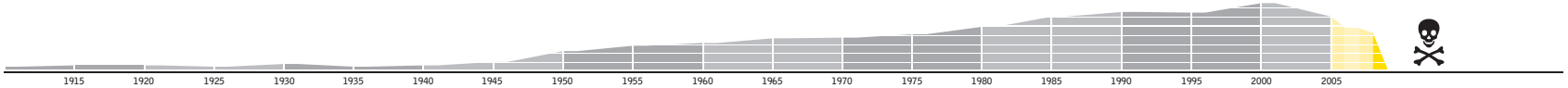
CIRCULATION [AVG. WEEKDAY DAILY]
THE NEW YORK TIMES



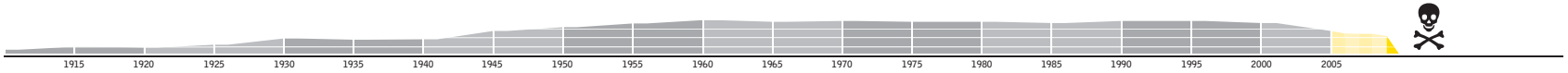
CIRCULATION [AVG. WEEKDAY DAILY]
THE WASHINGTON POST



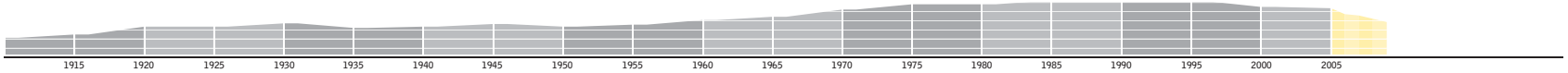
CIRCULATION [AVG. WEEKDAY DAILY]
THE BOSTON GLOBE



CIRCULATION [AVG. WEEKDAY DAILY]
THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS



CIRCULATION [AVG. WEEKDAY DAILY]
THE SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER



CIRCULATION [AVG. WEEKDAY DAILY]
THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

4.031
Conjectural Response 3: Journalism in the Archive

112

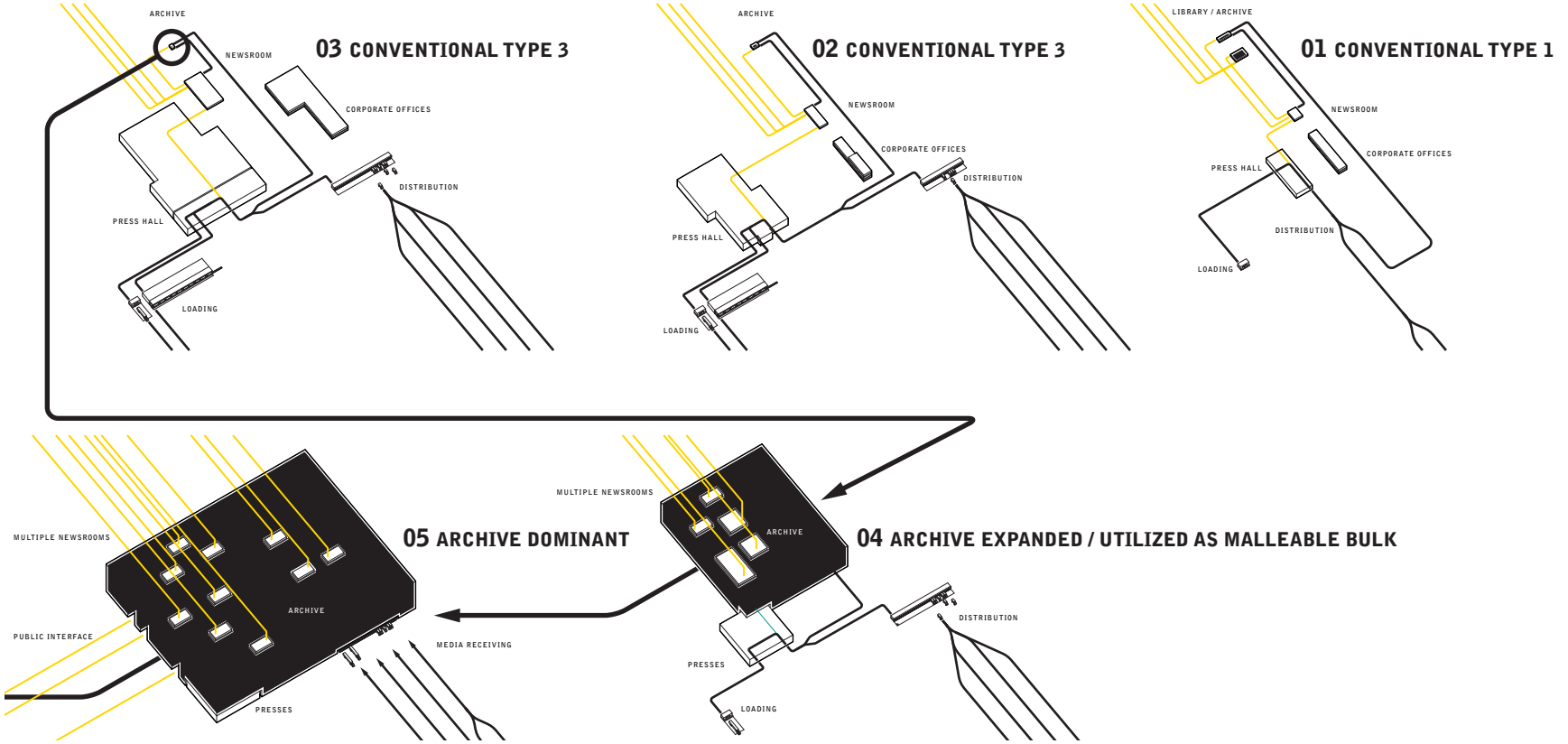
Emergence of the archive as a programmatic driver for the architecture of post-corporate journalism. ►

The physical archive has always been a component of the newspaper building program, though its perceived importance has been recently diminished by the advent of digital information storage.

In the scenario explored by this thesis, the physical archive — a repository for thoroughly vetted and non-manipulable informational "raw material" required by participatory modes of journalism — returns with a vengeance.

The design of this new architectural type is driven by the physical constraints imposed by the need to archive, preserve, and quickly access physical media.

The physical archive becomes an architectural medium / material: space for journalism is literally embedded in the malleable bulk of the archive.


ARCHIVE
NEWSROOM
CORPORATE OFFICES
DISTRIBUTION
PRESS HALL
LOADING
03 CONVENTIONAL TYPE 3
ARCHIVE
NEWSROOM
CORPORATE OFFICES
DISTRIBUTION
PRESS HALL
LOADING
02 CONVENTIONAL TYPE 3
LIBRARY / ARCHIVE
NEWSROOM
CORPORATE OFFICES
PRESS HALL
DISTRIBUTION
LOADING
01 CONVENTIONAL TYPE 1
MULTIPLE NEWSROOMS
ARCHIVE
PUBLIC INTERFACE
MEDIA RECEIVING
PRESSES
05 ARCHIVE DOMINANT
MULTIPLE NEWSROOMS
ARCHIVE
DISTRIBUTION
PRESSES
LOADING
04 ARCHIVE EXPANDED / UTILIZED AS MALLEABLE BULK

The automated rack-supported warehouse.

The system chosen for the design of the physical archive was selected for four reasons:

It is a standardized and widely-implemented system for the organization and warehousing of large quantities of small items (like machine parts, or informational documents) that need to be accessed quickly and remotely. Computer-driven stacker cranes obviate the need for human access to the rack space.

The racks that support the archive are structurally redundant and present opportunities for geometric modulation when deployed in high volume / large scale applications.

The location of archive access points for the public is not constrained by the physical location of the archived items. Conveyors and other mechanical systems can rapidly convey requested items to any part of the building, and subsequently return these items to the archive. This permits great flexibility in the design of public space within the building.

The system imposes architectural (structural) constraints while providing a high degree of malleability. Just as generic commercial space initially transformed the Type 2 newspaper headquarters into an opportunity for innovative design, the automated rack-supported warehouse *adds malleable bulk* the the spatially non-specific contemporary journalism program.

►

Photograph: Stacker crane installation at a small parts warehouse in Duebendorf, Switzerland. Photographer: Maagtechnic AG, unknown.

►►

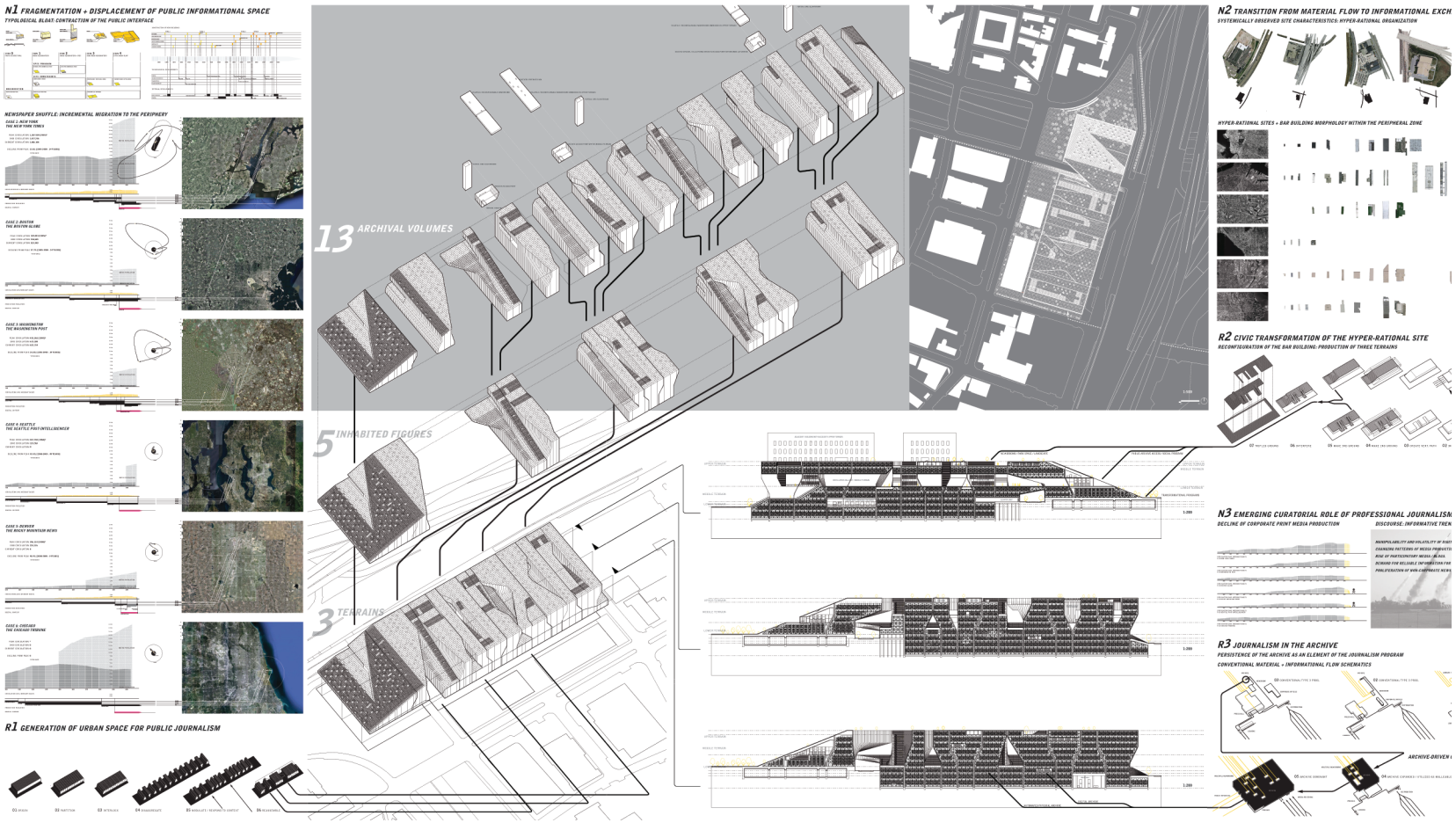
Photograph: A rack-supported warehouse under construction, showing structural redundancy of racks, which support the warehoused items and the lightweight building envelope. Photographer unknown.

4.04
Exploded Axonometric

116 **Overall organization of enabling narratives and the conceptual journalism building type / architectural proposal.** ►

The three primary enabling narratives are keyed into the architectural proposal to indicate the formal, spatial, and organizational possibilities that arise from each when applied to the design of a conjectural architecture for journalism.

Diagrams of the three enabling narratives may be found in the preceding sections, **Sections 4.011, 4.021, 4.031.**

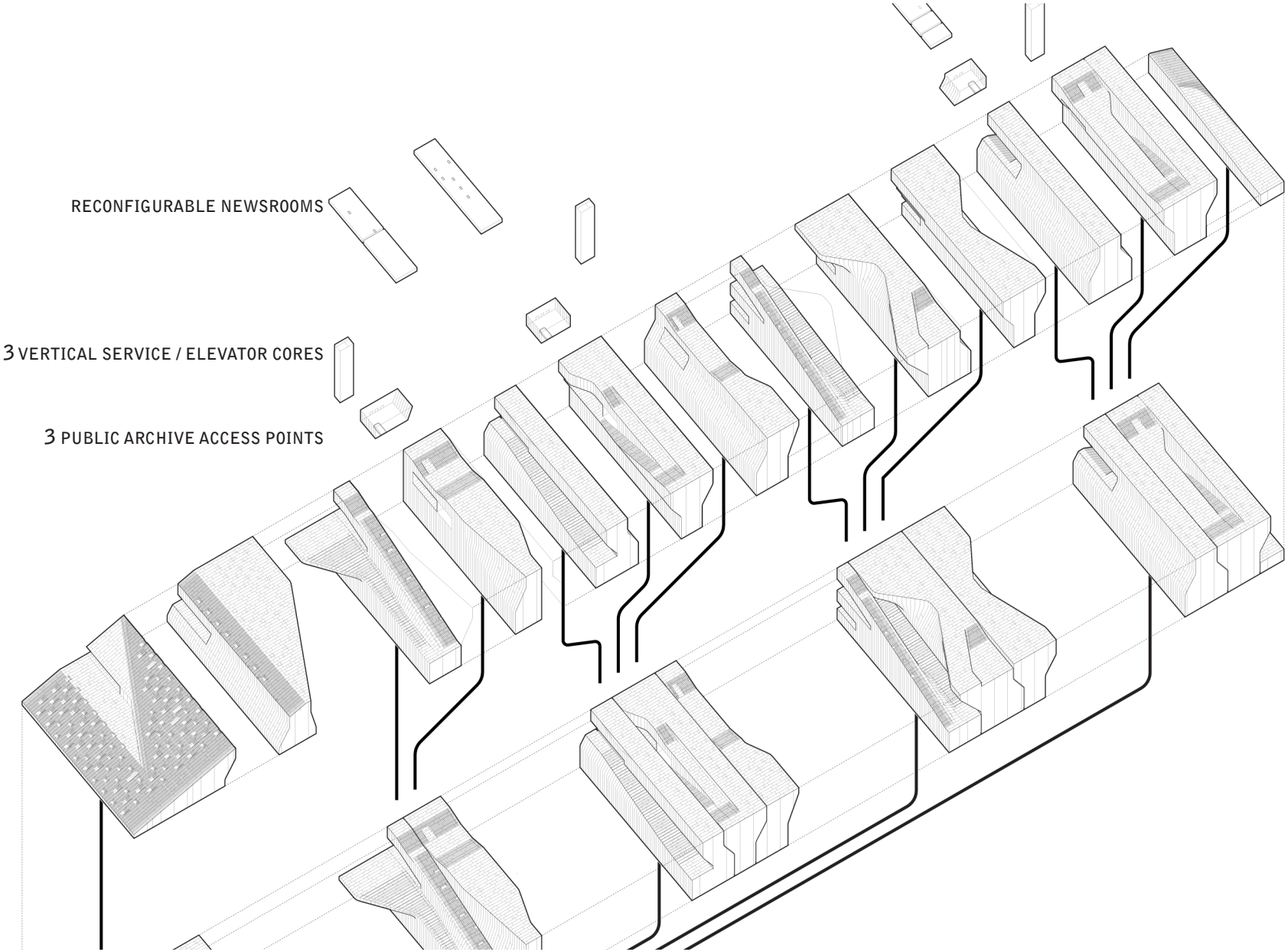


n1: EXPANSION OF PUBLIC SPACE FOR JOURNALISM

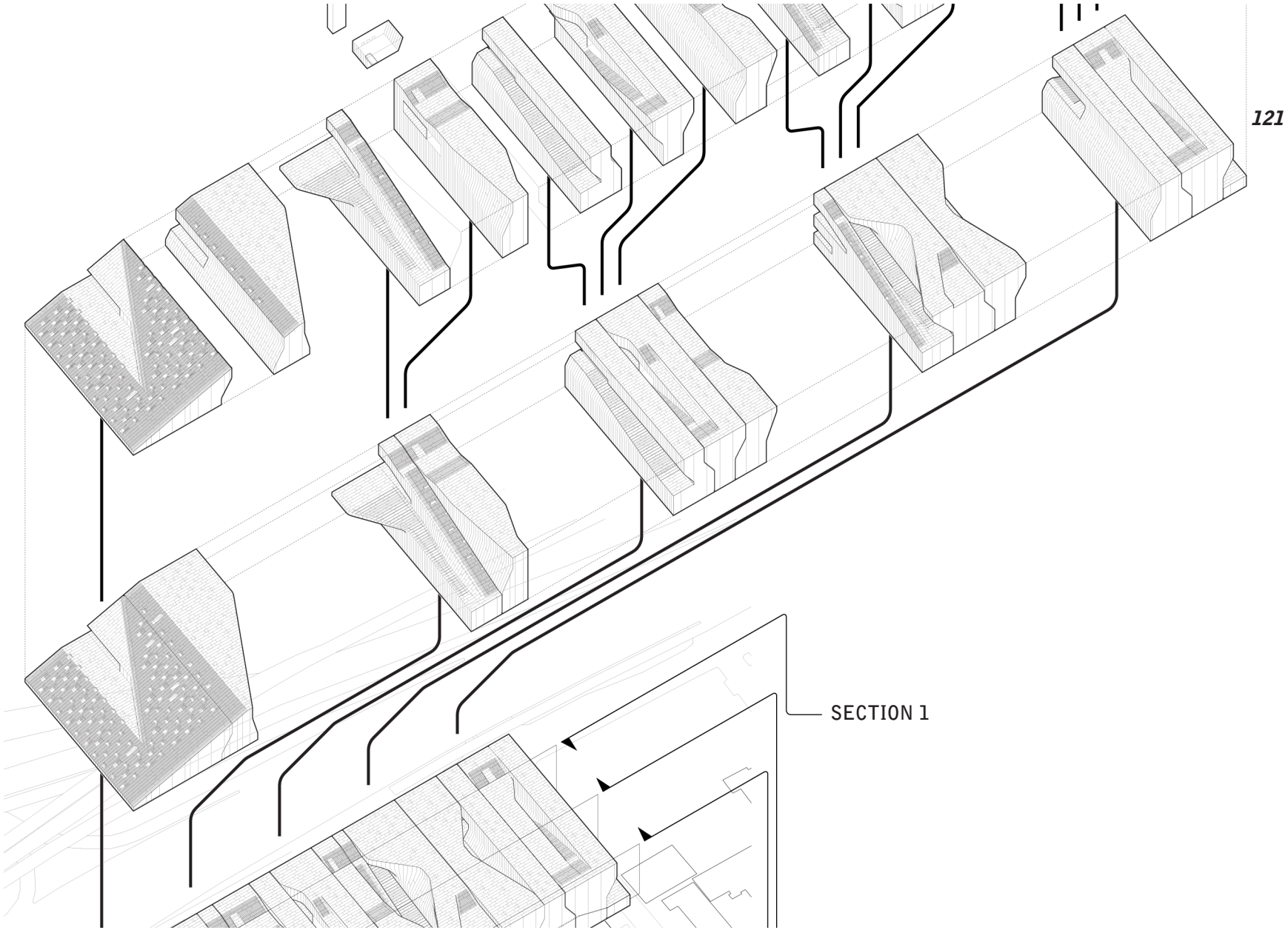
n3: JOURNALISM IN THE ARCHIVE

118 **Detail: Exploded axonometric.** ►

13 Archival Volumes.

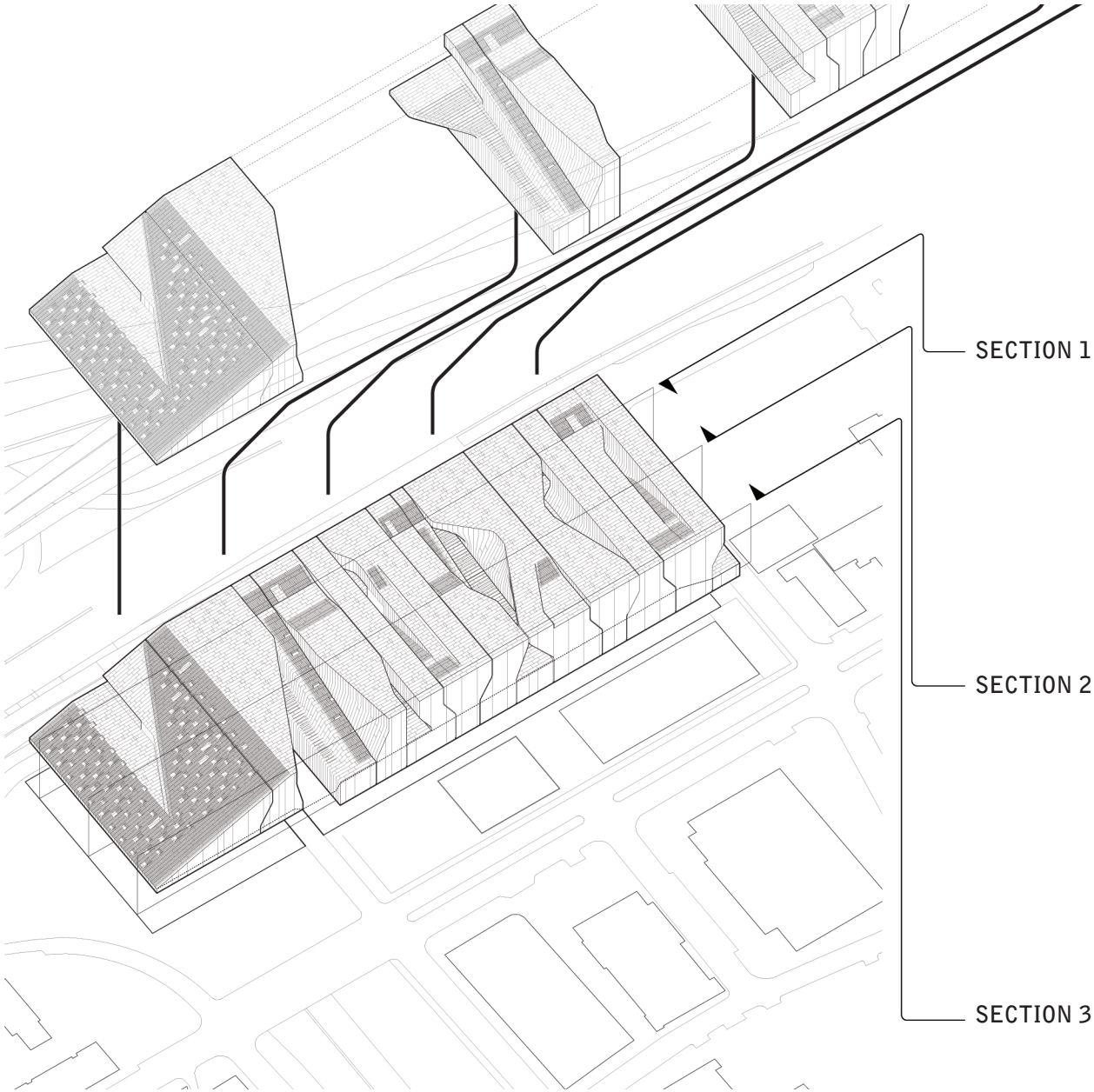

RECONFIGURABLE NEWSROOMS
3 VERTICAL SERVICE / ELEVATOR CORES
3 PUBLIC ARCHIVE ACCESS POINTS

120 **Detail: Exploded axonometric.** ►

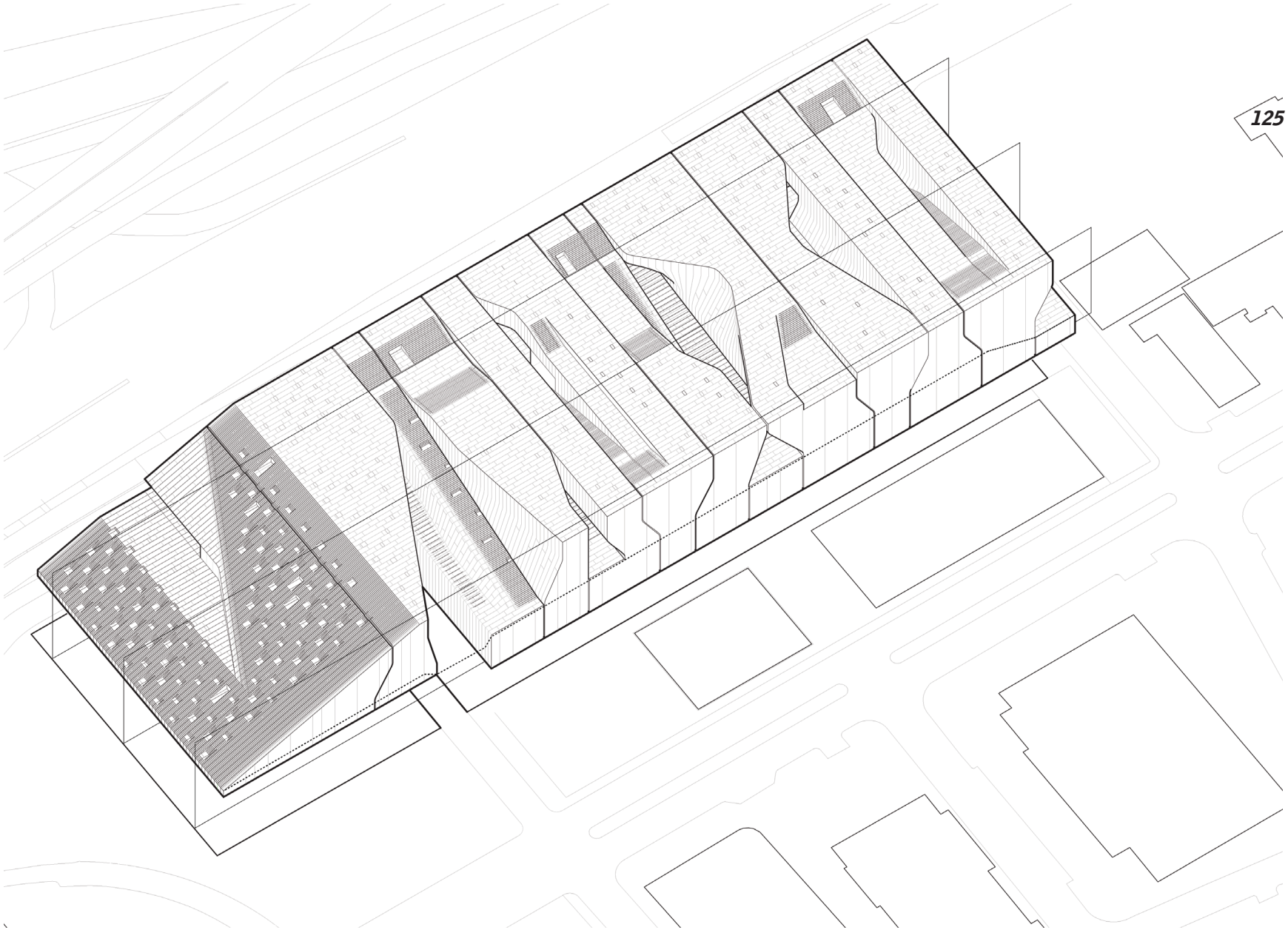

121
SECTION 1

122 **Detail: Exploded axonometric.** ►

3 Public Terrains.

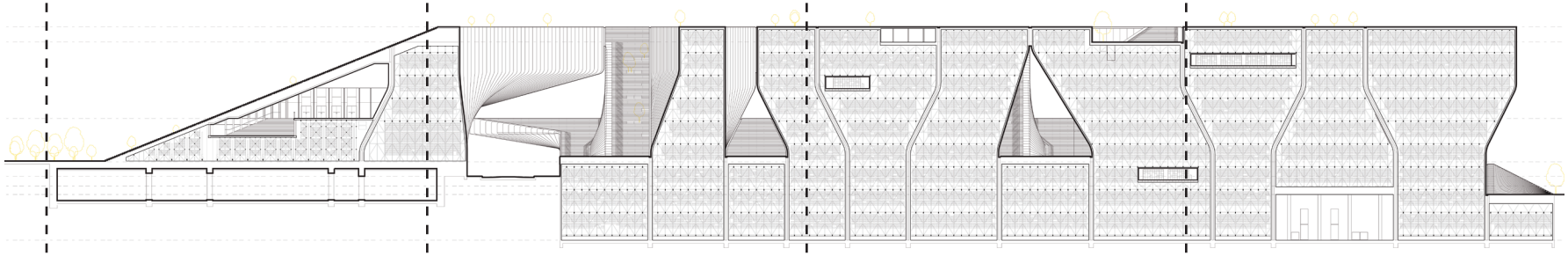

SECTION 1
SECTION 2
SECTION 3

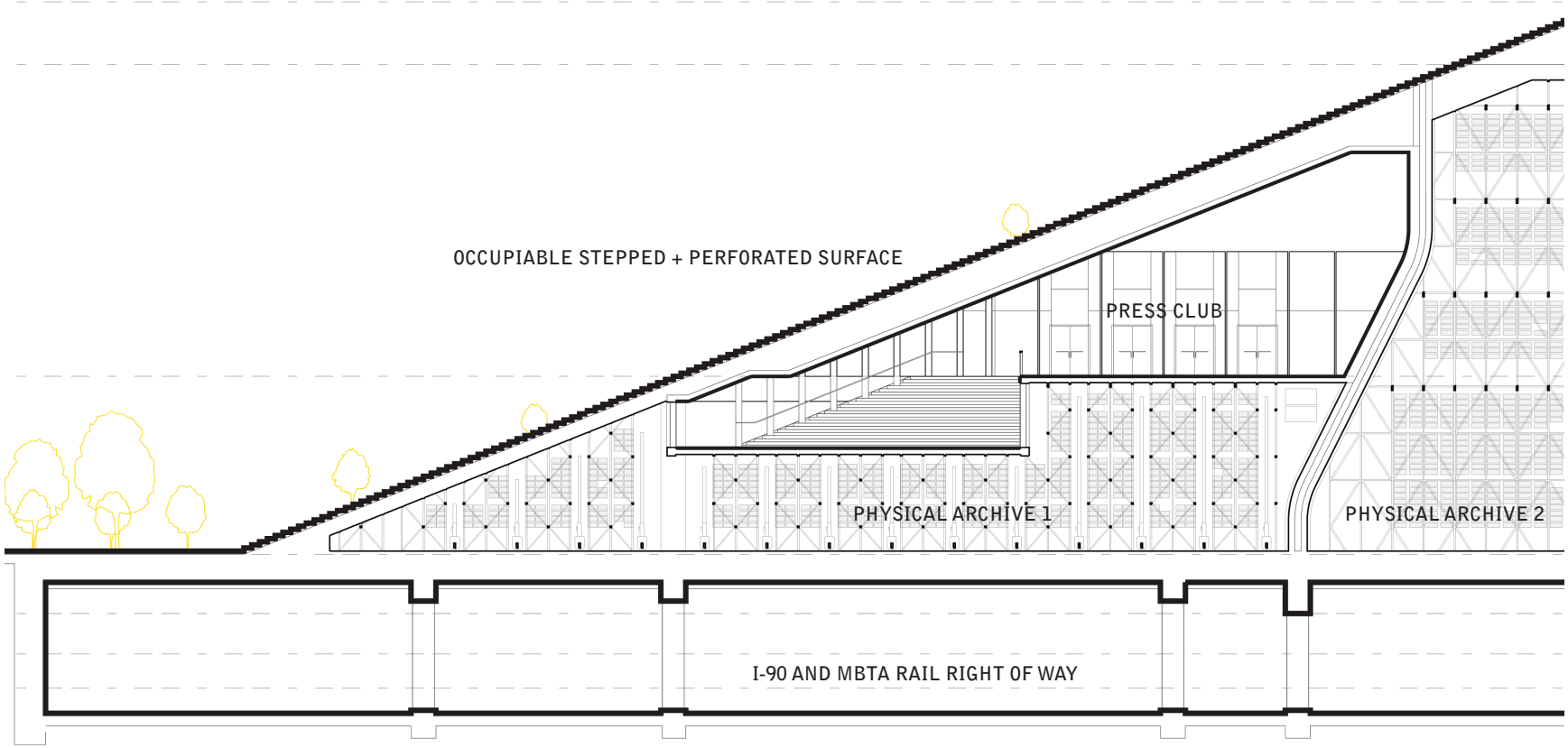
124 **Detail: Exploded axonometric.** ►

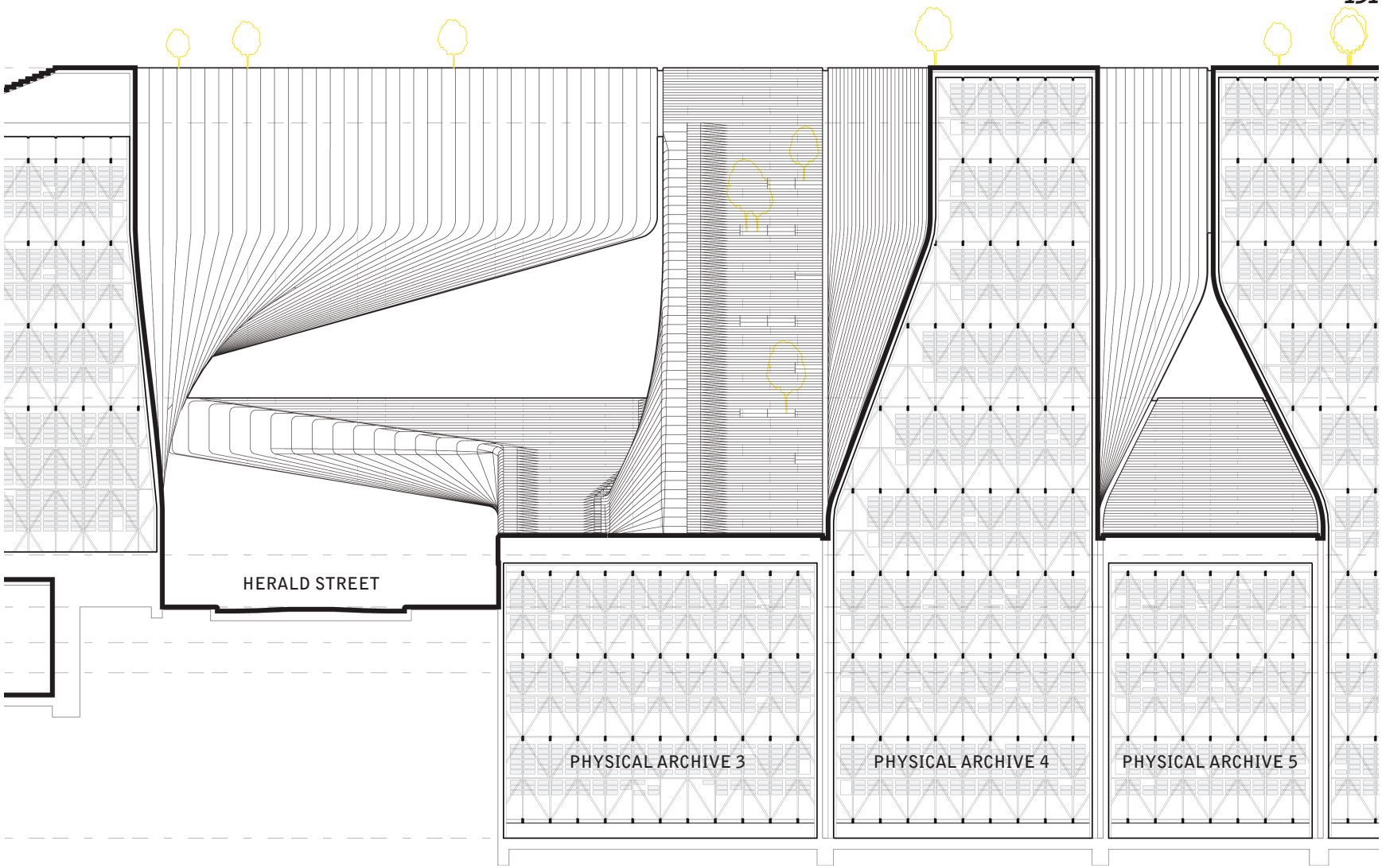


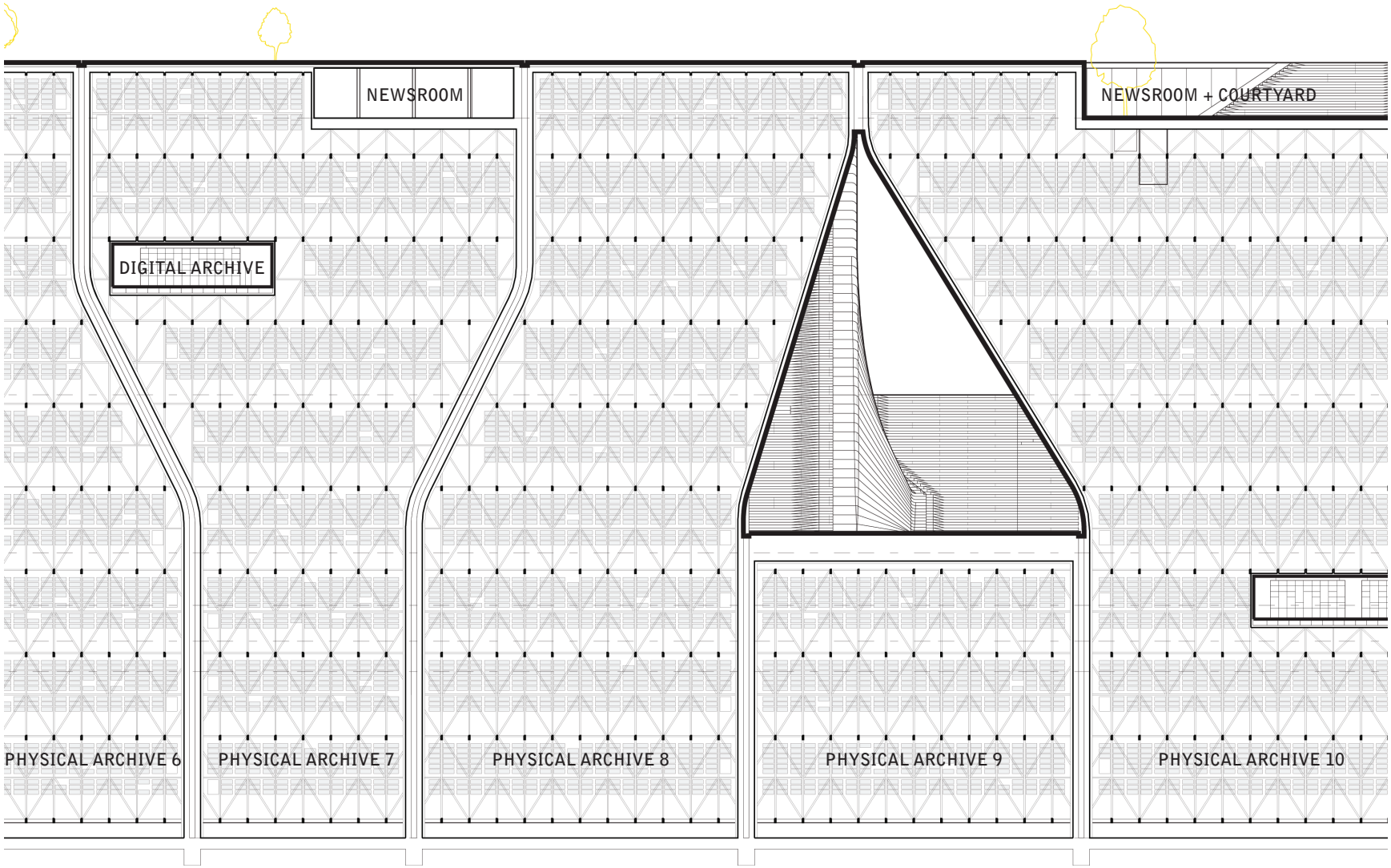
4.05
Sections

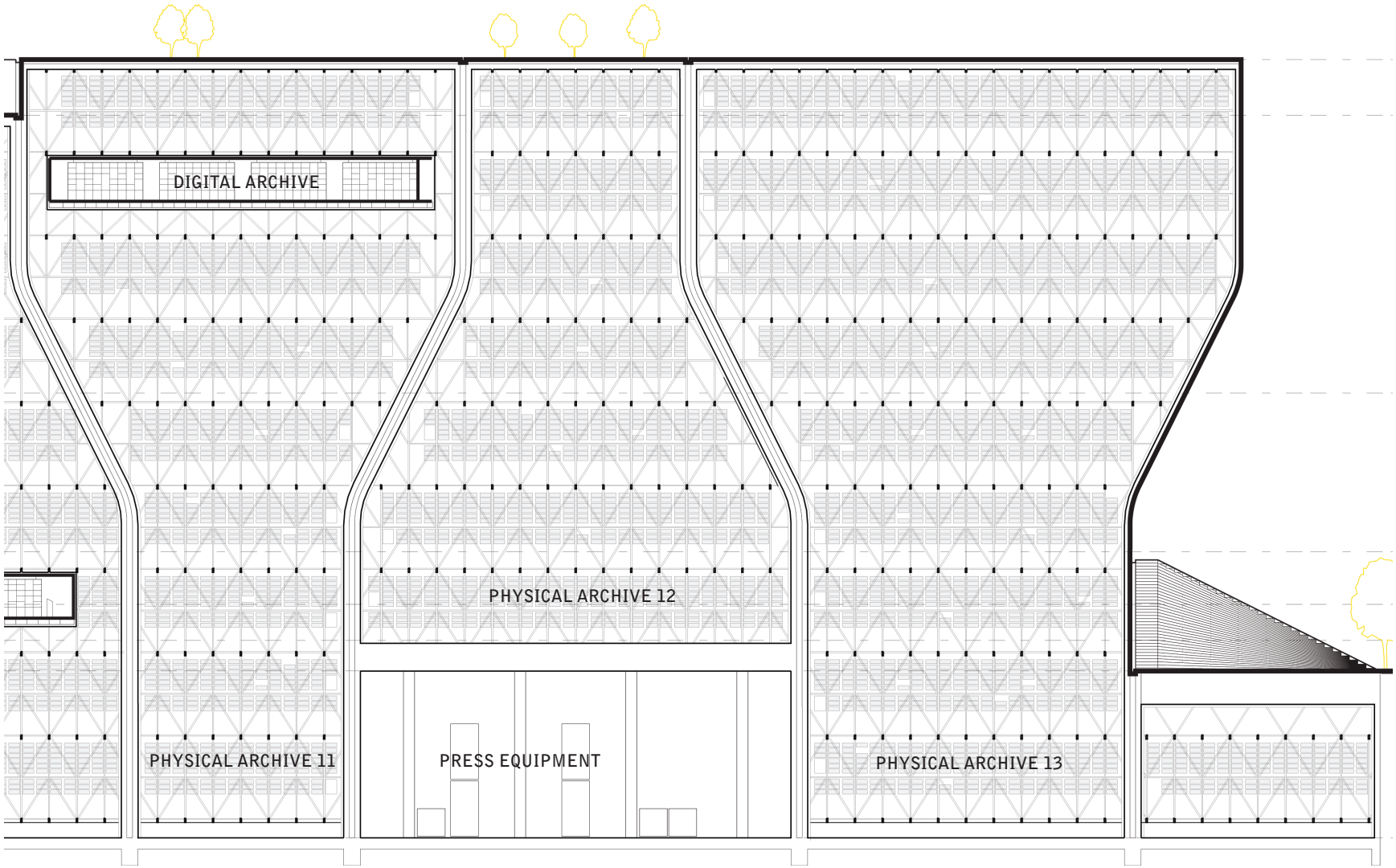
DETAIL 1 DETAIL 2 DETAIL 3 DETAIL 4



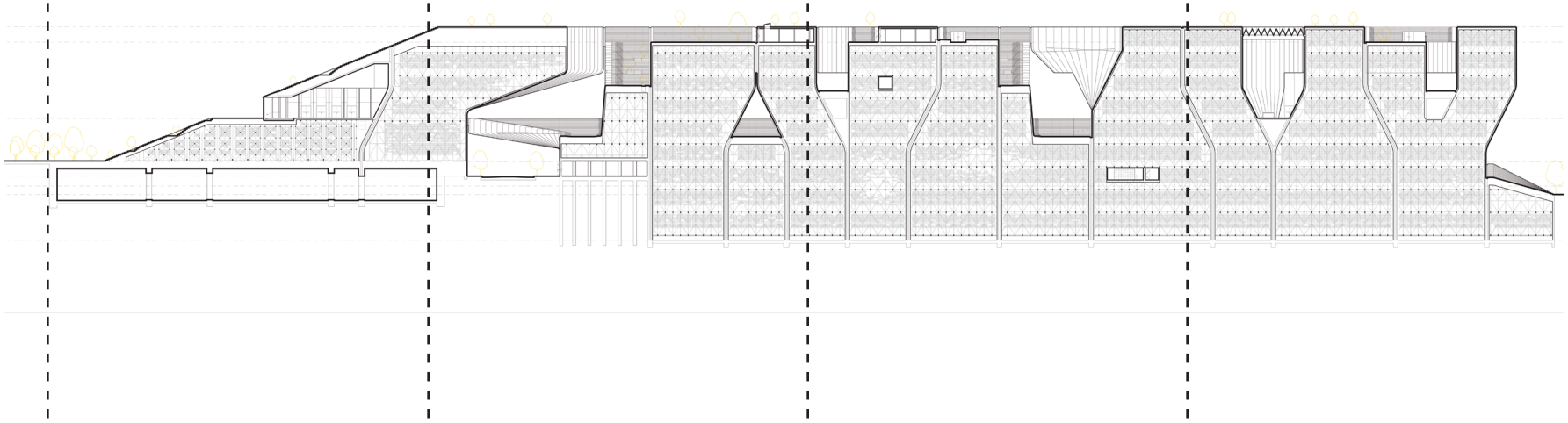

OCCUPIABLE STEPPED + PERFORATED SURFACE
PRESS CLUB
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 1
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 2
I-90 AND MBTA RAIL RIGHT OF WAY

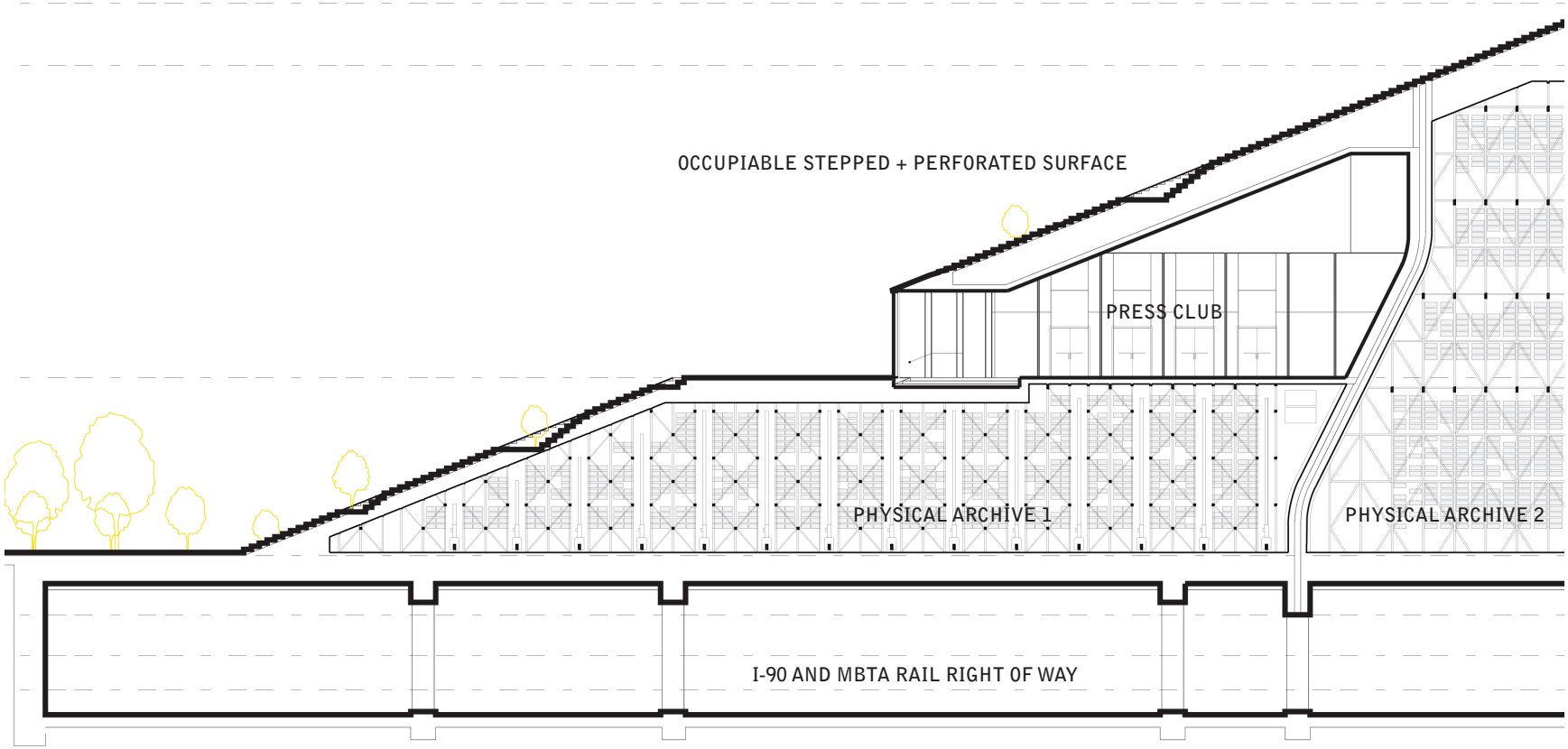

HERALD STREET
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 3
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 4
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 5

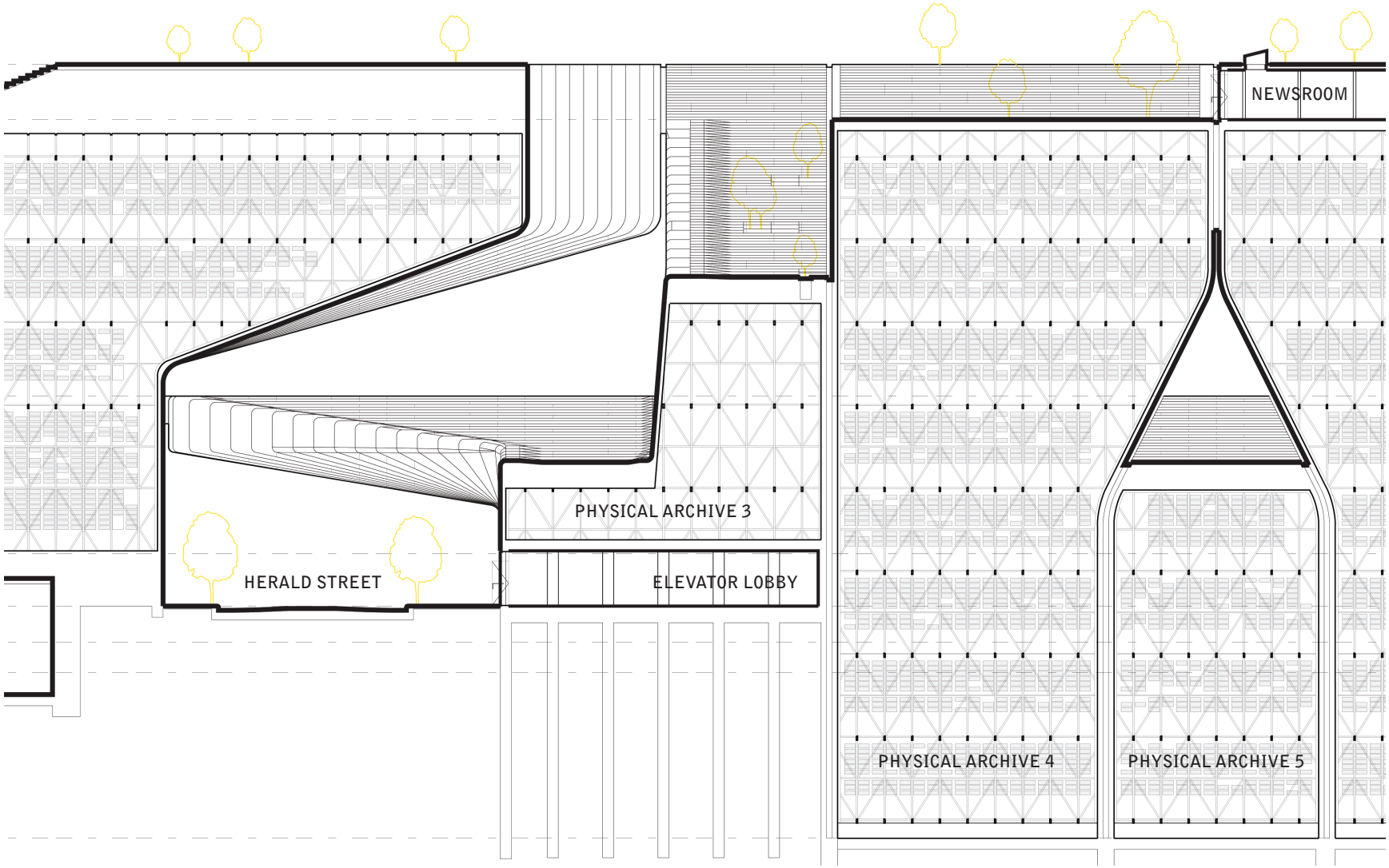

NEWSROOM
NEWSROOM + COURTYARD
DIGITAL ARCHIVE
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 6
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 7
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 8
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 9
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 10

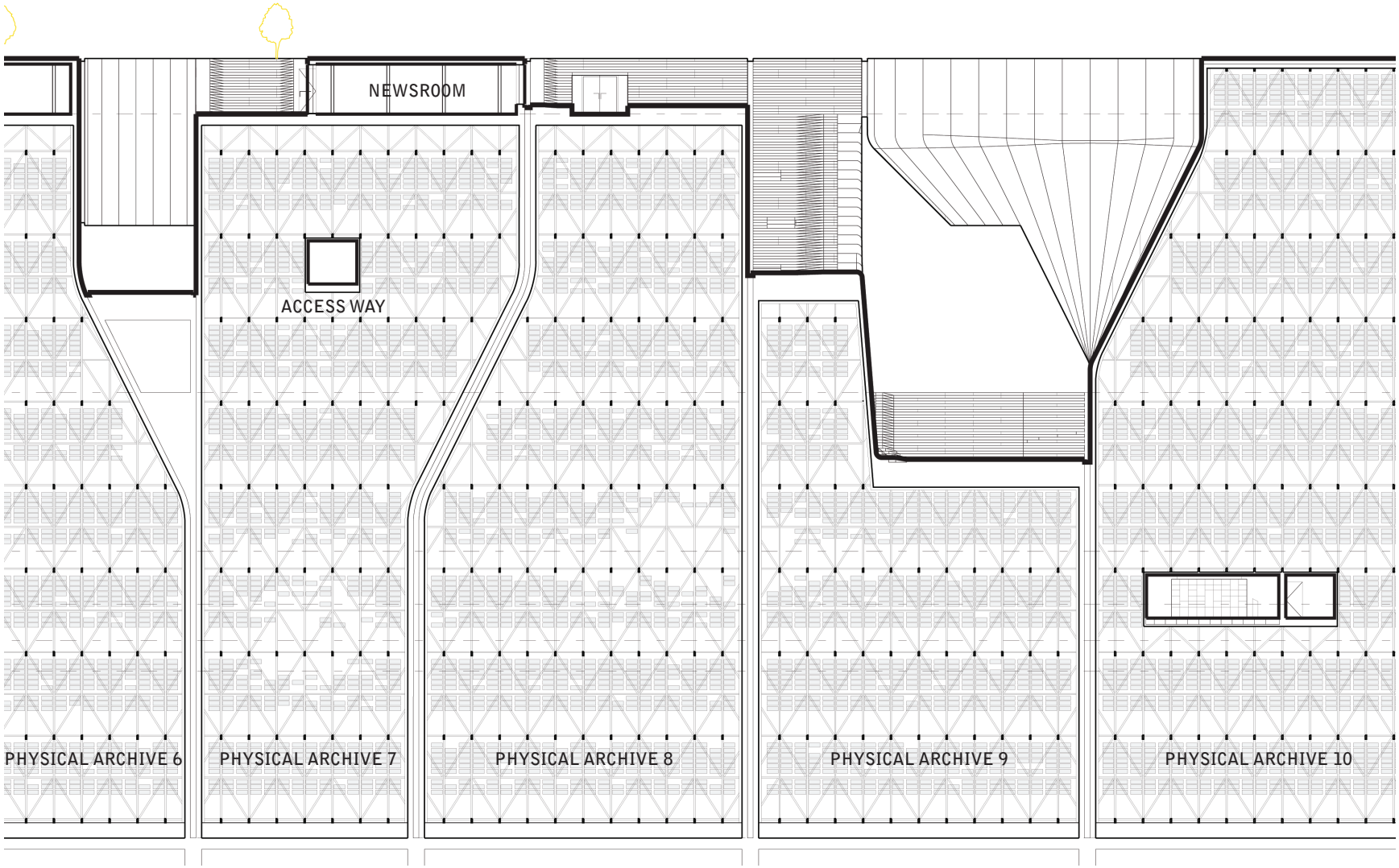

DIGITAL ARCHIVE
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 12
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 11
PRESS EQUIPMENT
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 13

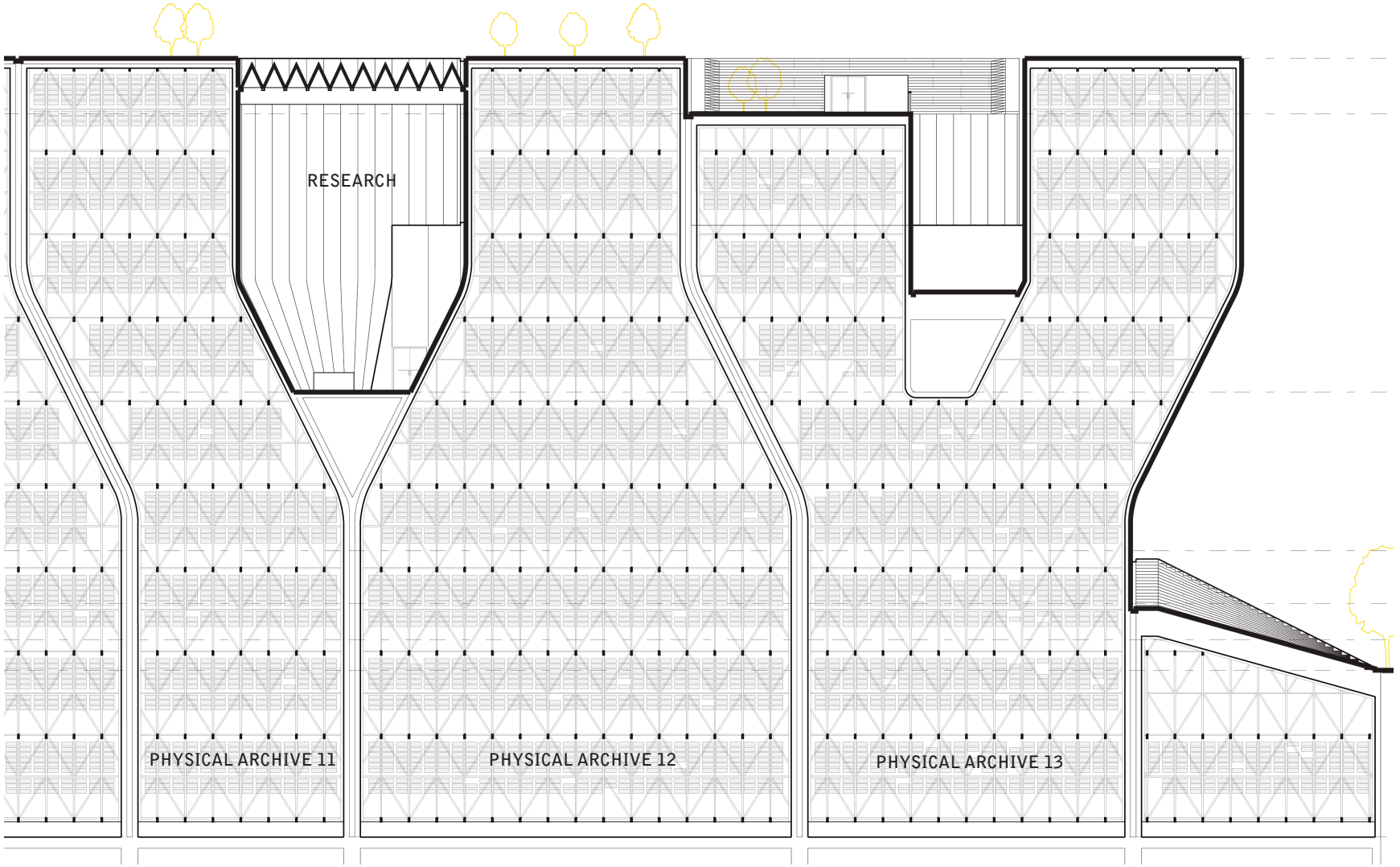
DETAIL 1 DETAIL 2 DETAIL 3 DETAIL 4



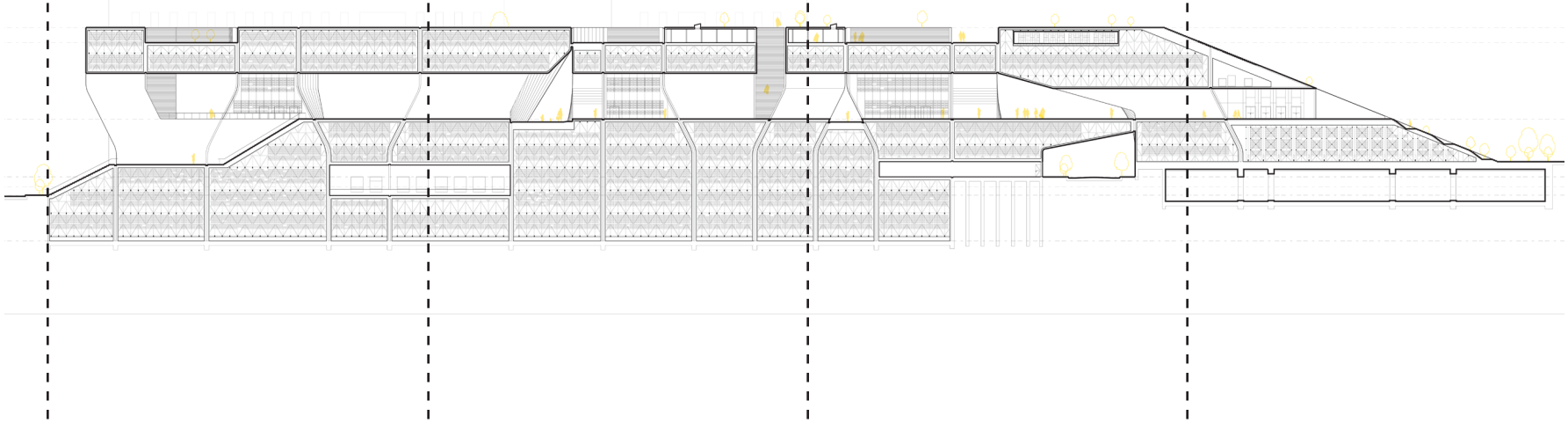

OCCUPIABLE STEPPED + PERFORATED SURFACE
PRESS CLUB
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 1
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 2
I-90 AND MBTA RAIL RIGHT OF WAY

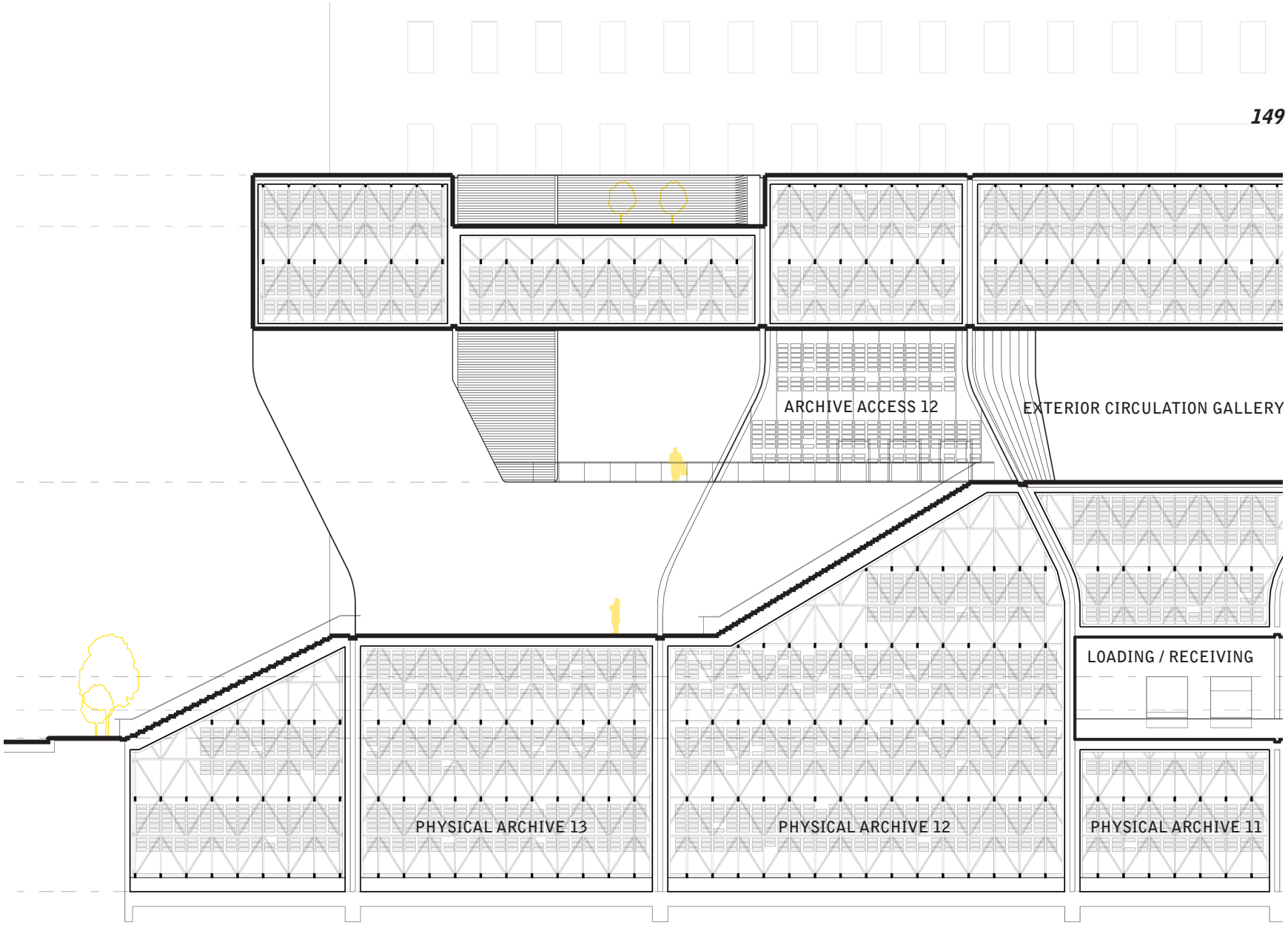

NEWSROOM
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 3
HERALD STREET
ELEVATOR LOBBY
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 4
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 5

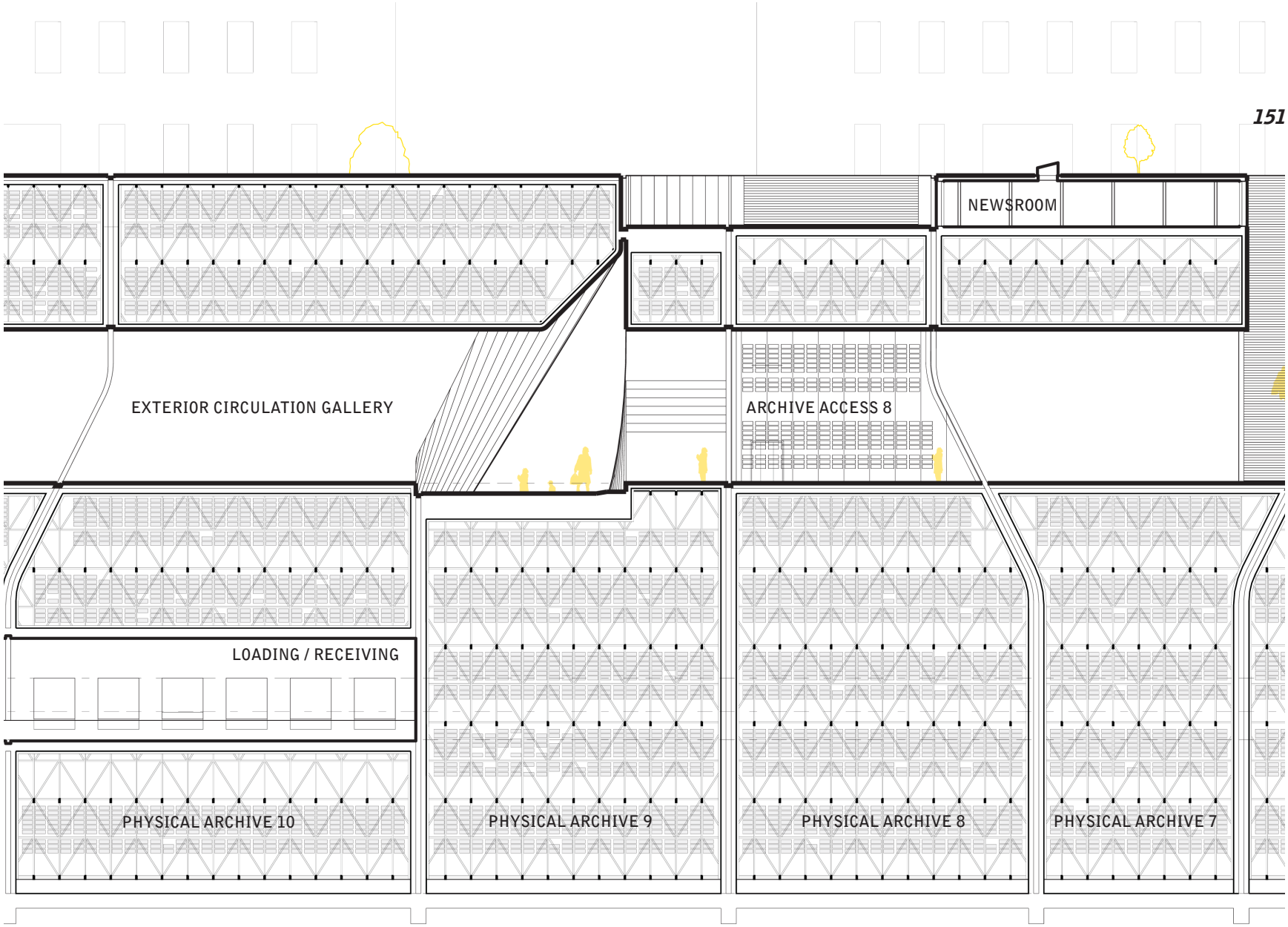

NEWSROOM
ACCESS WAY
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 6
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 7
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 8
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 9
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 10

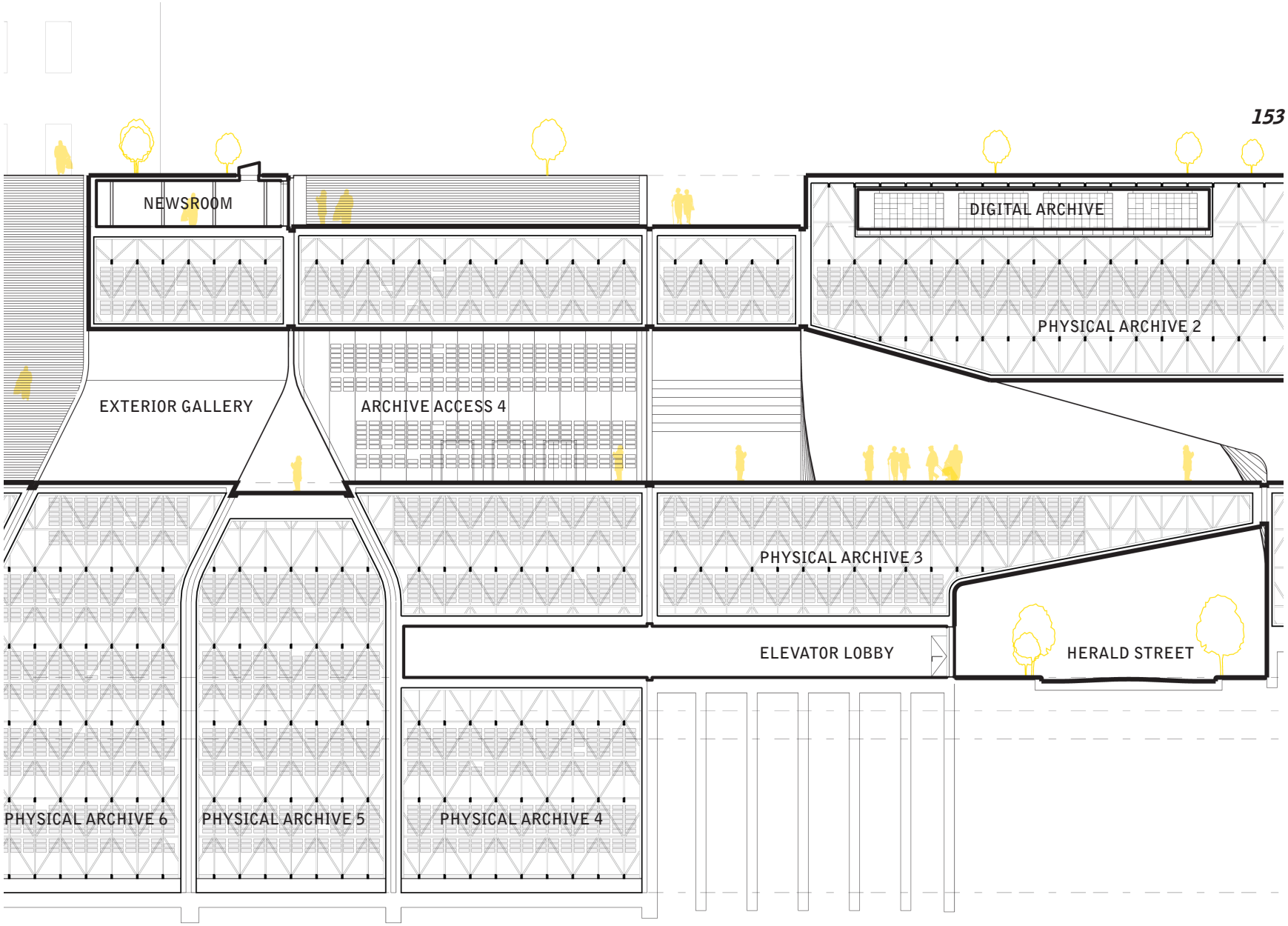

RESEARCH
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 11
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 12
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 13

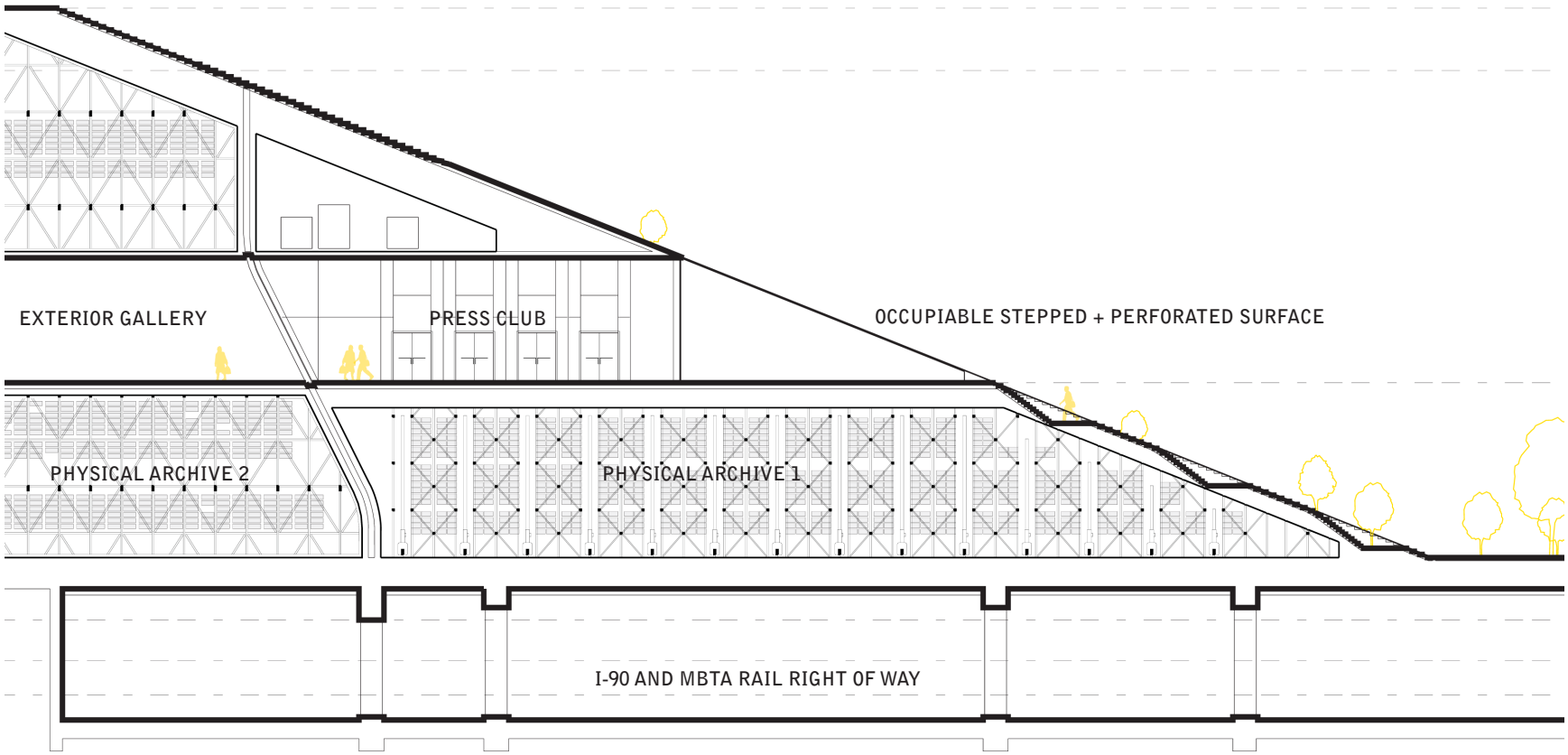
DETAIL 1 DETAIL 2 DETAIL 3 DETAIL 4




ARCHIVE ACCESS 12
EXTERIOR CIRCULATION GALLERY
LOADING / RECEIVING
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 13
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 12
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 11


NEWSROOM
EXTERIOR CIRCULATION GALLERY
ARCHIVE ACCESS 8
LOADING / RECEIVING
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 10
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 9
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 8
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 7


NEWSROOM
DIGITAL ARCHIVE
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 2
EXTERIOR GALLERY
ARCHIVE ACCESS 4
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 3
ELEVATOR LOBBY
HERALD STREET
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 6
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 5
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 4

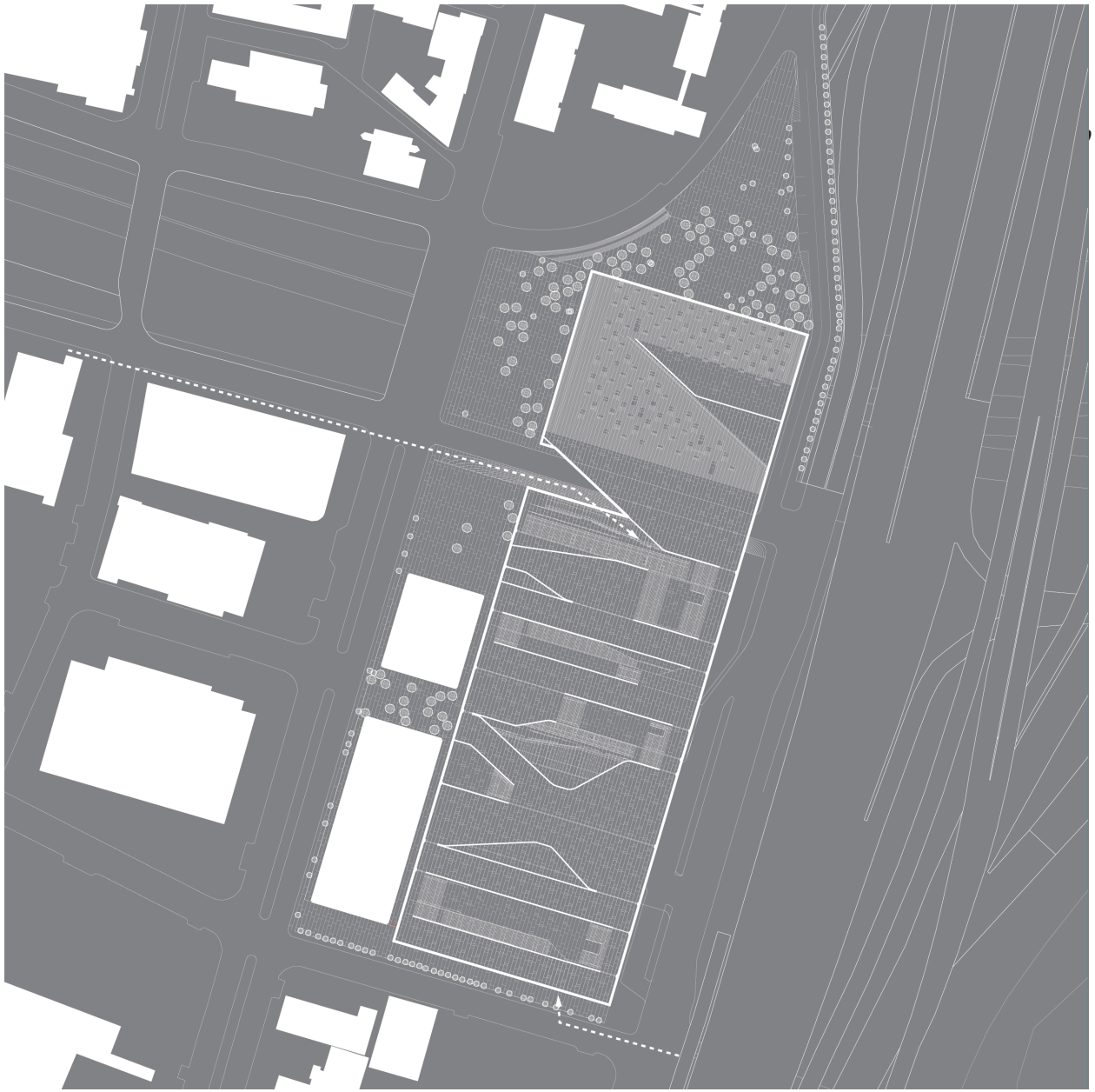

EXTERIOR GALLERY
PRESS CLUB
OCCUPIABLE STEPPED + PERFORATED SURFACE
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 2
PHYSICAL ARCHIVE 1
I-90 AND MBTA RAIL RIGHT OF WAY

4.06
Site Plan

156 **The test site: a hyper-rational parcel adjacent to rail and highway infrastructure, and occupied since 1958 by the Boston Herald's plant.** ►

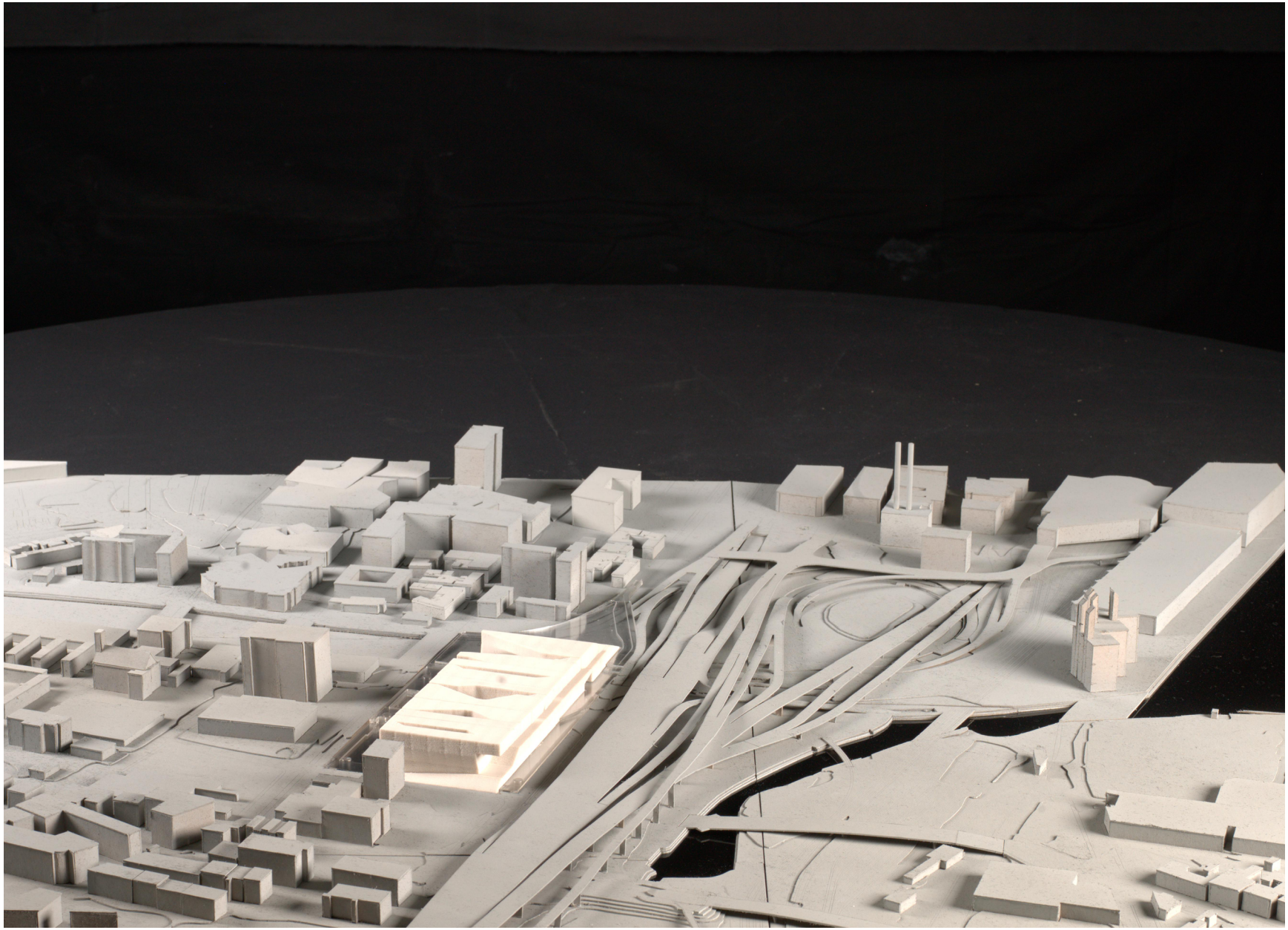

HARRISON AVENUE
TRAVELER STREET
THE BOSTON HERALD
HERALD STREET
MBTA RAIL
I-90
ALBANY STREET
I-93

158 **The architectural proposal: ground multiplied to produce three public terrains at the city's periphery.** ►



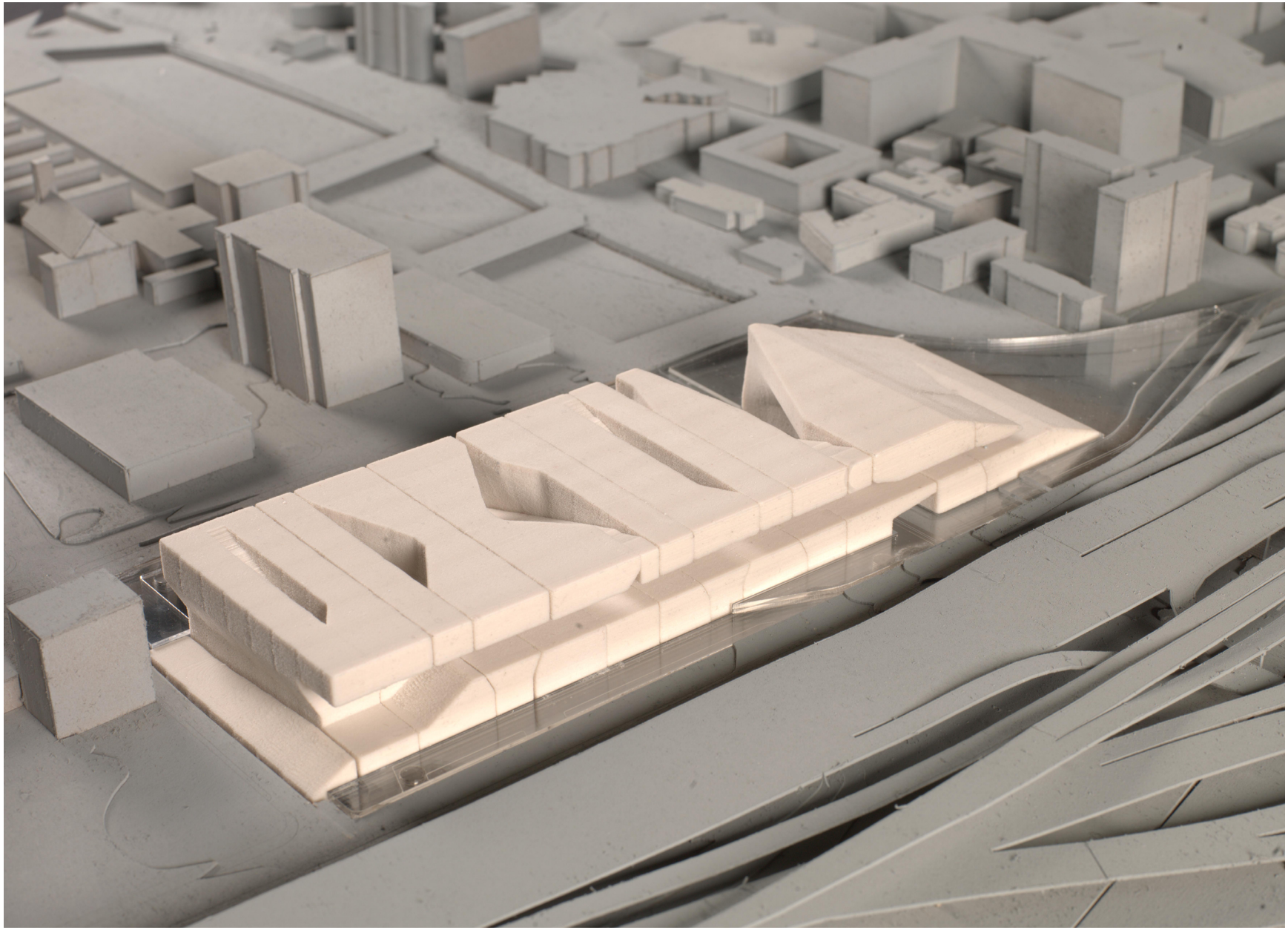
4.07
Proposal in situ

160 **Aerial view from the south, showing relationship to adjacent infrastructure and large-footprint industrial buildings.** ►



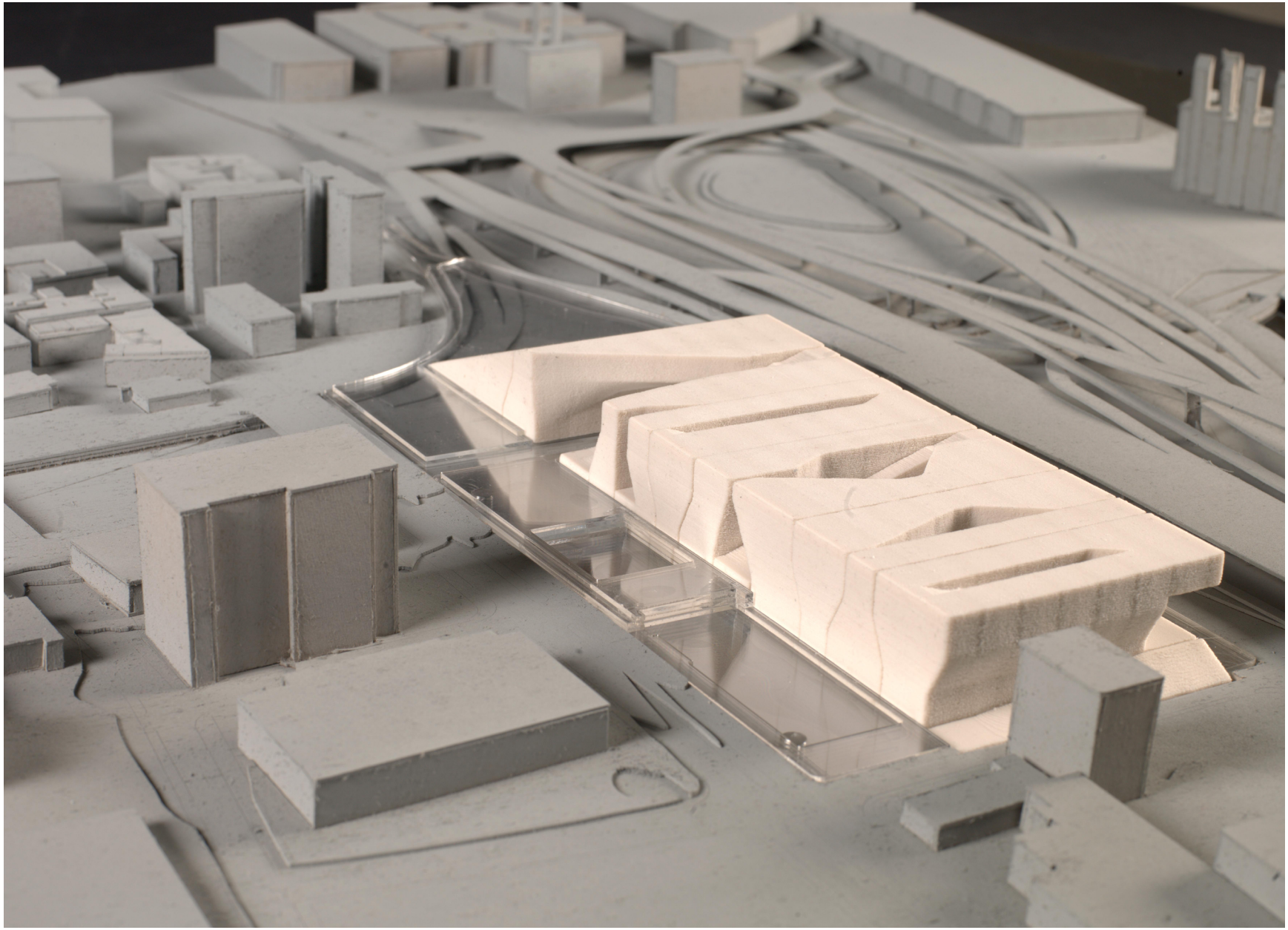
162 **Aerial view from the southeastern approach, looking toward the Back Bay district of Boston, Massachusetts.** ►

Public circulation access to the archive occurs in the longitudinal void on the eastern face of the buiding.



164 **Aerial view from the southwestern approach, looking toward downtown Boston, Massachusetts and the waterfront.** ►

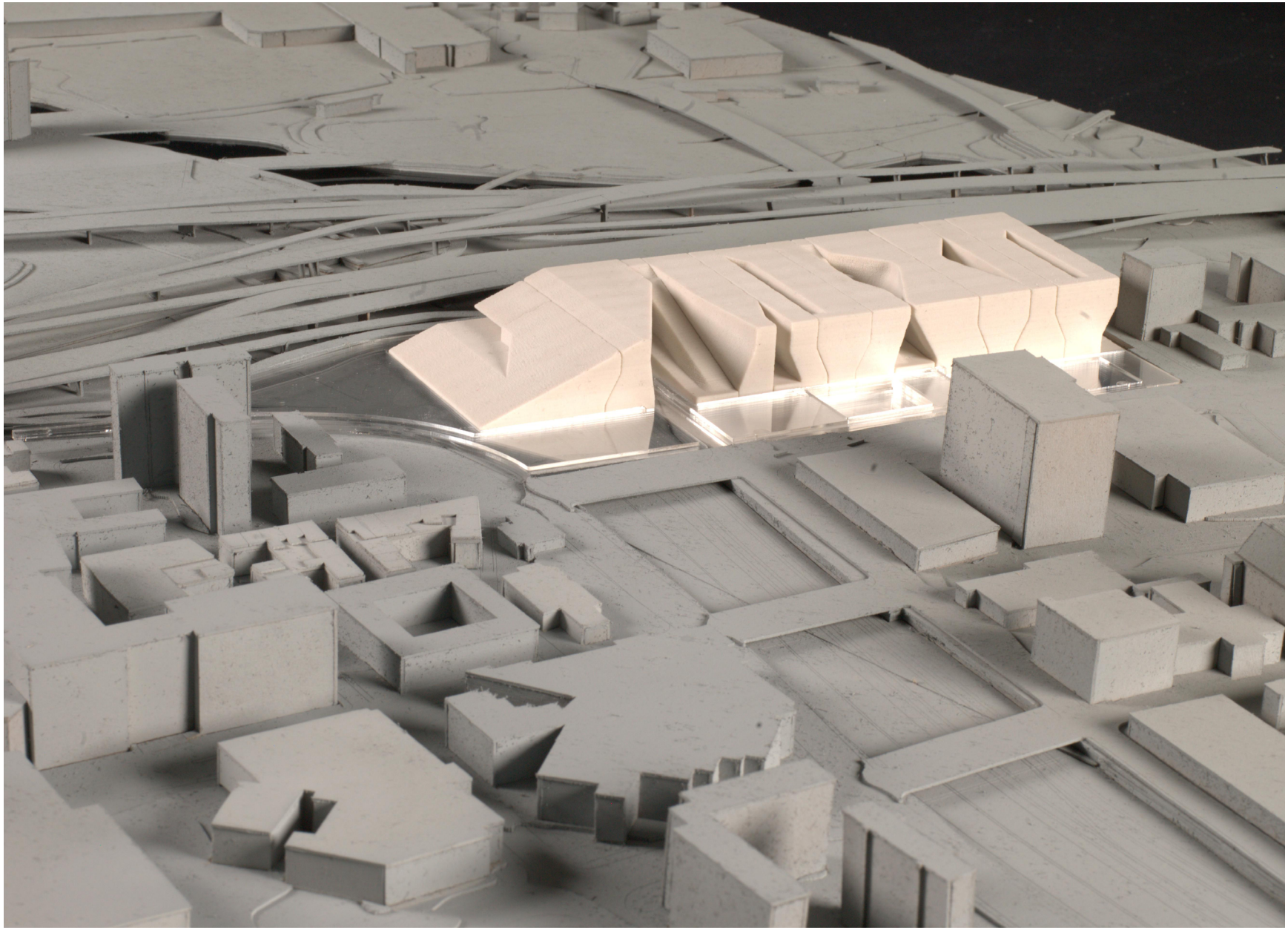
Voids between the archive volumes open onto the public space of the city.



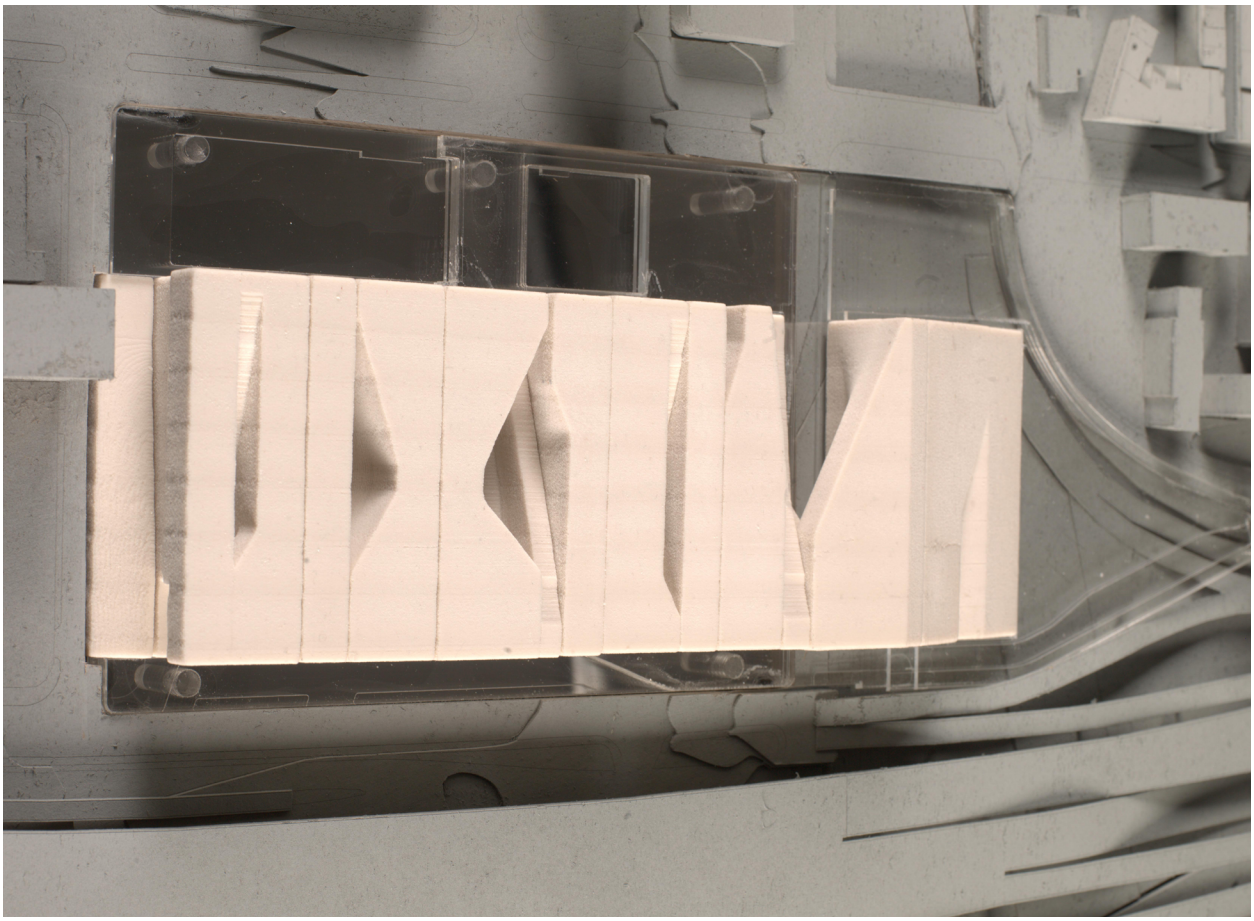
166

Aerial view from the northwestern approach, looking toward the waterfront, showing building's relationship to depressed rail/ highway corridor (I-90).

The building acts as a piece of circulatory infrastructure, creating three new public terrains at an industrialized margin of the city.

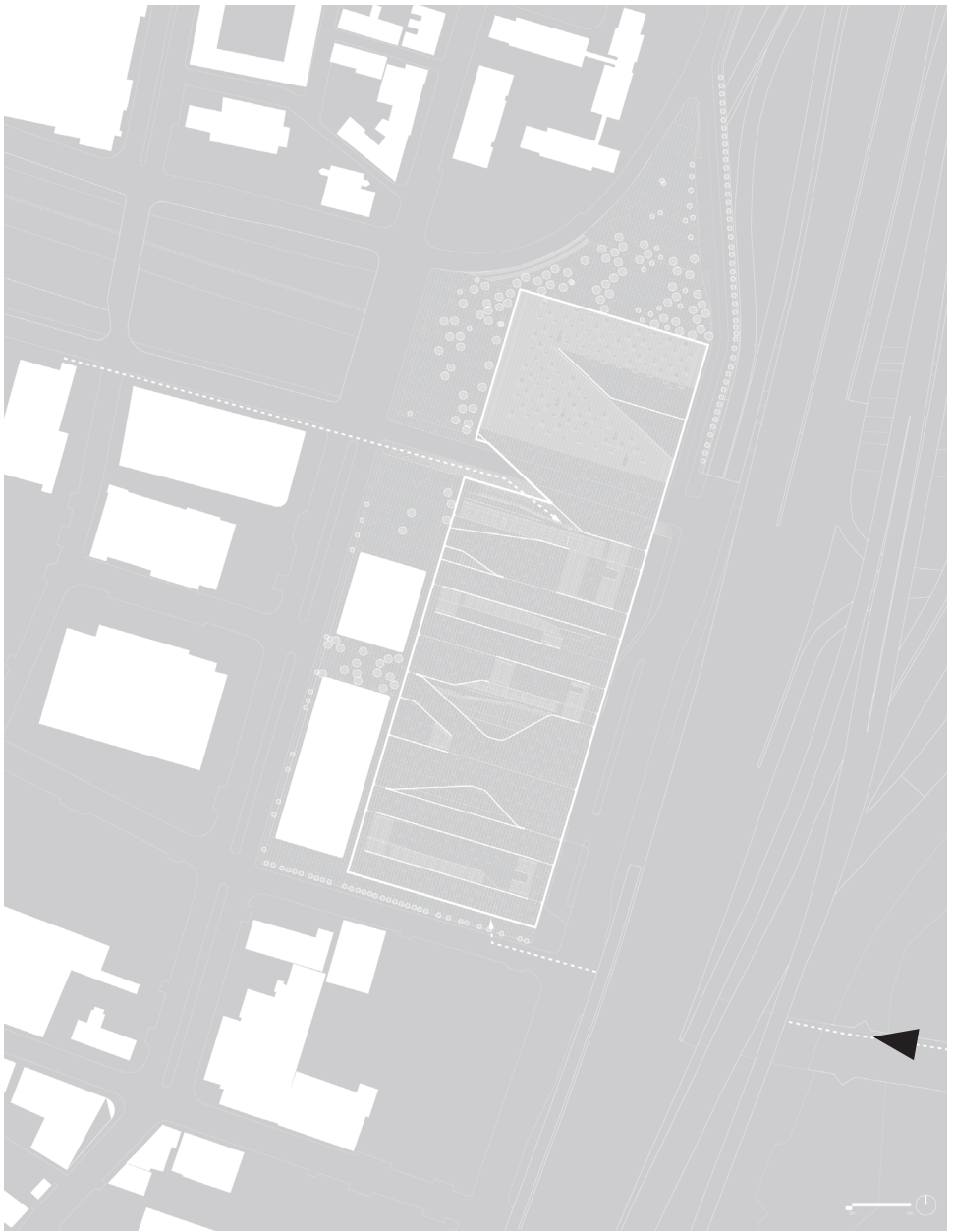


168 **Aerial view, showing voids created by the interlocking of the archival volumes and the building's relationship to the adjacent elevated interstate (I-93).** ►

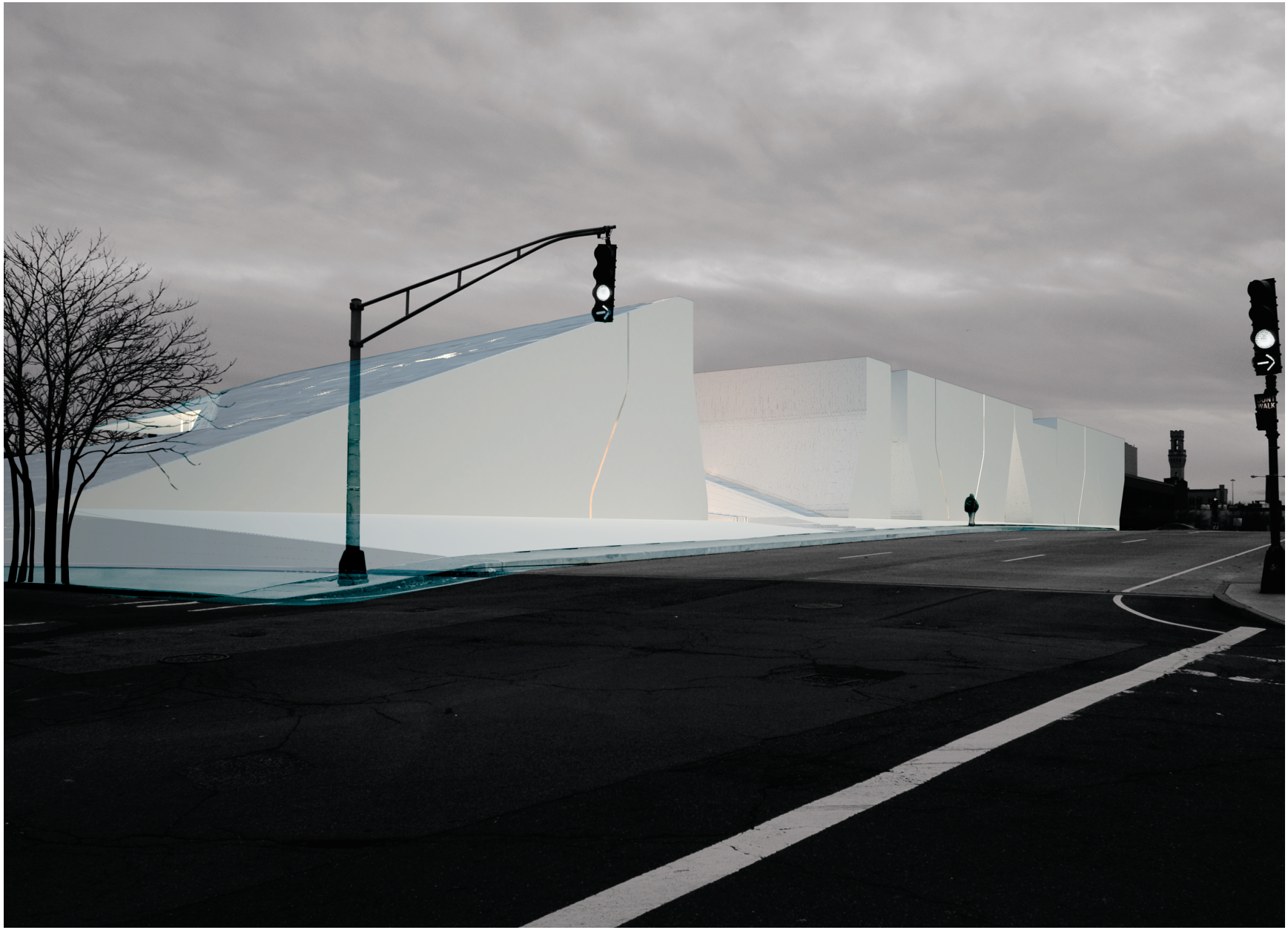


170 **Diagrammatic view, showing disassembled components / archival volumes.** ►

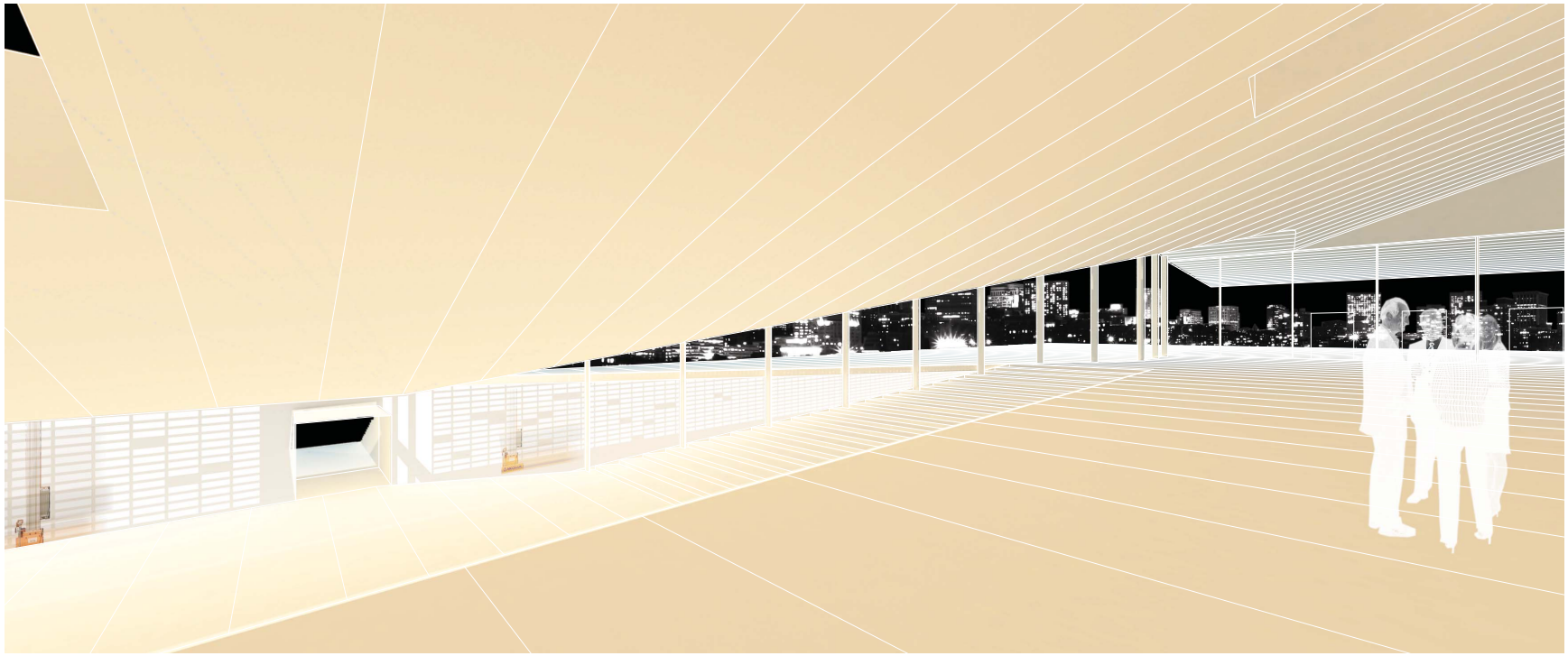
172 **View from the Broadway approach.**



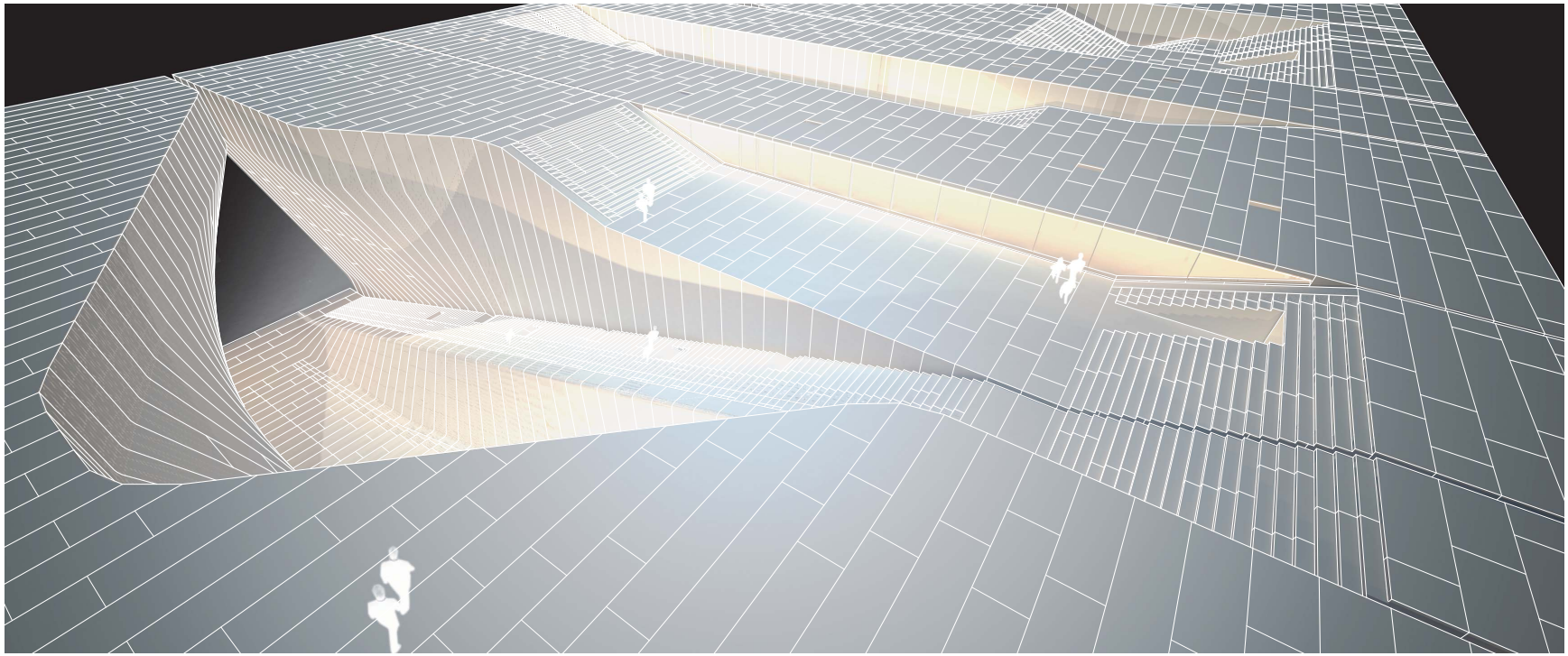
174 **View from the Harrison Avenue approach.**



176 **Interior view: the Press Club.**



178 **Aerial View: Newsrooms embedded in upper terrain.**



180 **View of archive access point from gallery.**